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THE U.S. ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGY FOR COMBATING TERRORISM:
LESSONS OBSERVED AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

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ABSTRACT

To depict lessons identified to date in the U.S. War on Terror and investigate potential solutions, this paper analyzes and compares the strategy and organizational composition of Al Qaeda (AQ) and networked Islamic terrorist organizations against the U.S. organization and strategy for combating terrorism.

AQ and affiliates is a network operating in at least 60 countries with the strategic goal of a revived caliphate guided under strict Salafi Islam. Osama bin Laden and his top advisors intend to destroy Israel, expel U.S. and western interests from the Mid East, and replace Mid East secular governments with Islamic governments. AQ masterfully exploits the internet to recruit, train, finance, and provide logistics to their entire network. To move and acquire money, AQ infiltrates legitimate charitable organizations via the internet and employs the informal hawala system. AQ exploits the injustice, poverty and a negative perception of the U.S. and Western dominance to provide itself with willing followers. Conversely, their most significant vulnerability is that the greater Islamic world disagrees with their strict Salafi ideology and does not approve of terrorist tactics.

As a networked non-state actor, AQ poses challenges that the U.S. national security apparatus is not well designed to handle. The institutionalized and stove-piped interagency architecture has created a cumbersome process through which the elements of national power are wielded. At the high operational levels, horizontal coordination is often cumbersome, ineffective and slow. High-level interagency leaders cling to their departmental views as a form of bureaucratic protectionism. The structure through which the U.S. combats terrorism is a subset of the national security apparatus. As such, operational seams are marked by the same interagency stovepipes, which avert the requisite agility, speed and synchronization of the elements of national power needed to execute effective actions in combating terror.

U.S. solutions for combating terrorism include accepting the WOT as an ideological struggle with Islamic fundamentalism and ideological struggles last for a long period of time as learned in the Cold War. Mastering the art of perception management must be at the center of the U.S. strategic communications objectives, because the current perceptions of U.S. hegemony in the Mid East must be replaced with constructive and optimistic messages. For the U.S. to gain much needed Muslim societal awareness and influence, it will need to enlist foreign born scouts via a new OSS-like system.

A whole of government approach will project all elements of national power in concert, on-time and with a common purpose. The agility and speed required to produce broad spectrum, effective solutions to combat terror will require updated authorities, capabilities, and responsibilities. Tying professional incentives to a National Security Officer designation will reduce future interagency stovepiping. The U.S. national security apparatus will benefit from an information age National Security Act. As a result, the U.S. organization for combating terror will become capable of projecting all elements of national power in an agile, synchronized and timely manner will be more effective.

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INTRODUCTION

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

Sun Tzu

At the conclusion of World War II the United States emerged as an awakened international giant. The good fortune of geography had protected its infrastructure from destruction, and the nation suffered comparatively low numbers of military and civilian losses. Powerful fascist nations had been soundly defeated. The communist Soviet Union and democratic United States quickly transitioned from allied victors to bitter political rivals and became the two greatest military powers in the history of man.

After the war, U.S. lawmakers passed the National Security Act of 1947 (NSA 47) to organize the defense of the nation against the real military threat and the ideological struggle posed by the Soviet Union, which was to become a 45 year cold war. Since 1947, subsequent legislation and directives have, for the most part, improved the manner in which the U.S. is organized to protect its interests against the military threats of opposing nation-states.

During the 20 years leading up to September 11, 2001 (9/11), various Muslim terrorist organizations had successfully conducted strikes against U.S. interests, personnel and property at home and abroad. On 9/11, 19 Arab men belonging to a non-state affiliated terrorist organization managed to strike the continental United States more effectively than any nation in nearly two centuries.

Many of the questions concerning the circumstances of the 9/11 terrorist attacks have been answered, but after more than five years, is the U.S. better organized to deal

with networked non-state enemies? Successfully defending against any threat requires internal preparedness and external effects and influences. To meet those challenges, much has been done to create and increase internally focused, and primarily defensive, anti-terrorist (AT) efforts such as the formation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). Much has also been done to improve externally focused, offensive counter-terrorist (CT) efforts, which have since been aimed at the destruction of Al Qaeda (AQ) and its affiliates.

The agencies and departments that project the elements of U.S. national power for the most part conduct their specific roles and missions effectively. Each agency or department is defined by the authorities under which it operates and by the responsibilities for which it is held accountable. Professionals who rise within the ranks of these organizations do so by achieving operational successes and by advancing organizational capabilities. At the top of the U.S. national security apparatus is the President's Cabinet and the National Security Council (NSC) where the directors of the agencies and departments that represent the elements of national power collaborate and advise and assist the President. This system of projecting the elements of U.S. national power is large, powerful and organized to handle affairs with foreign nation-states.

How can a relatively small and modestly funded group such as AQ succeed in its mission of destruction and havoc against a U.S. system that wields such great power? Put simply, the defense challenge posed by AQ, and indeed any determined and networked non-state actor, is one for which the current U.S. system to project national power is not well organized. Along with being large, powerful and capable of handling affairs with foreign governments, the NSC and Cabinet are designed to act in a deliberate

manner. The agencies and departments through which the U.S. President wields the elements of national power are organized vertically, and as such, lack the ability to create quick, nimble, subtle and well-coordinated responses.

An in-depth review of the terrible mishap in 1980 at the Desert One forward air-refueling point revealed institutionalized, service related stove-piping within the Department of Defense, and became the trigger for the Goldwater-Nichols Act. As a result of that legislation, the U.S. military has become more effective, joint and interdependent. Twenty years later, military officers have the professional requirement to go through joint professional military education, work on joint staffs and conduct joint operations.

An in-depth review of 9/11 has similarly exposed an institutionalized, stove-piped architecture within the interagency, a by-product of which is a cumbersome process through which the U.S. President employs the elements of national power. The resulting problem is a lack of speed, agility, subtlety and coordination.

Effective solutions toward handling networked non-state actors is largely agreed to exist within the realm of interagency cooperation, yet these organizations are manned by professionals who rise by achieving operational successes within and for their own organizations. Horizontal coordination within the interagency is conducted at the highest levels by agency and department leaders whose membership on the NSC focuses and serves the President, but at the mid and lower levels the horizontal coordination within the interagency is practically non-existent.

The thesis of this paper suggests that in order to effectively combat networked terrorist organizations in the future, the U.S. should develop a networked national

security apparatus capable of projecting all elements of national power in a synchronized and timely manner. To support that thesis this paper conducts a comparative analysis of the strategic aims and organizational composition of AQ and networked Islamic terrorist organizations, and the foundation and composition of the U.S. national security apparatus from the enactment of the NSA 47 to today. Finally, this paper contrasts the two as a means to identify gaps within the elements of U.S. national power and organizational seams within the U.S. national security apparatus as they relate to combating terrorism.

The operational space within these gaps and seams mark the battle-space through which networked non-state actors such as AQ operate against U.S. interests. Reducing that battle-space and better engaging these elusive enemies with the requisite speed, deftness, subtlety and cooperation across the interagency spectrum, will require organizational and operational solutions aimed at improving high-level, coordinated and horizontal operational planning and directing combined with quick, nimble, subtle and decentralized tactical execution.

Chapter 1 investigates the organizational composition, strategy and disposition of AQ. Chapter 2 goes beyond AQ to offer a brief prospective on the growing threat of Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations. Chapter 3 reviews the history and construct of the U.S. national security apparatus, and Chapter 4 builds upon that foundation by examining the U.S. organization and strategy for combating terrorism. The result of the comparative analysis offered by Chapter 1 through Chapter 4 is the identification of the gaps and seams mentioned in the last paragraph. Chapter 5 briefly reviews the dynamics of organizational change, and Chapter 6 suggests potential

solutions aimed at improving the U.S. national security apparatus and its subordinate organization and strategy for combating terrorism.

CHAPTER 1

AL QAEDA: A NETWORKED TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Although the U.S.-led global war on terrorism has had some notable successes—such as the destruction of al-Qaeda’s sanctuary in Afghanistan, the elimination of many of the group’s leaders, and the growing resolve of many countries to take action against al-Qaeda and its associates—no informed observers believe that al-Qaeda will be eliminated anytime soon. Indeed, in some respects al-Qaeda has metastasized into an even more formidable adversary, dispersed across the world, largely self-sustaining, and constantly adopting new and innovative terrorism tactics.¹

There are dozens of definitions for terrorism. In fact, the U.S. government currently has no single definition that is universally recognized and agreed upon. For simplicity this paper will identify and use a basic, broadly accepted and simple definition. The Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines terrorism as “the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion.”²

To date the best example of a successful networked terrorist organization is Al Qaeda and its associated organizations. AQ is described as “a movement or a network of networks and affiliates with a presence in at least 60 countries, which confronts the US and its allies and the whole international system with the most dangerous form of terrorist threat ever posed by non-state actors.”³ AQ does not maintain regular military forces in the field. Instead it relies on a horizontal and decentralized organization of isolated cells that communicate and operate in a clandestine manner. AQ employs terror in an asymmetric manner to compensate for its relatively weak political and military

¹ Angel Rabasa, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, Sara A. Daly, Heather S. Gregg, Theodore W. Karasik, Kevin A. O’Brien and William Rosenau, *Beyond Al Qaeda, Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2006), XV.

² Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003), s.v. “terrorism.”

³ Frank Gregory and Paul Wilkinson, “Riding Pillion for Tackling Terrorism is a High-risk Policy,” Chatham House, ISP/NSC Briefing Paper 05/01, July 2005, accessed at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk>, on: 10 February 2007.

disposition. Each of these cells conducts missions and operations independent of the others, and the personnel, daily procedures, and geographic locations of each cell is kept secret from the others.

Similarities in certain areas between AQ and sophisticated criminal organizations in the West are worth mentioning. The difficulty of infiltrating the AQ brotherhood, the secrecy with which AQ operatives and cells communicate, the handling of finances, and the bold conduct of operations are examples. The dissimilarities are notable as well. Cultural views and ideologies, goals and strategies, and media and propaganda interests are areas of significant difference. To logically describe and frame AQ strategies, operations and organization, some examples and lessons learned can be roughly derived from experiences with organized crime. Other areas require study in the culture, motivations and phenomena of the Muslim societies that generate AQ membership.

AQ – Organization

In his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities on February 16, 2006, Middle Eastern expert James Phillips described AQ as “a transnational Sunni Islamist terrorist network operating in over 60 countries around the world.” He went further to break down the organization into three tiers. The first tier is “the core group, which now probably consists of fewer than 1,000 dedicated members, and perhaps fewer than 500.” He describes the second tier as AQ affiliates comprised of “a disparate network of Islamic revolutionary groups” that “are loosely affiliated with AQ central, share its long-term goals and the broad outlines of its ideology.” His third tier consist of “loose

collections of Islamic radicals who organize themselves for ad hoc attacks, sometimes with support from AQ central, but often inspired by al-Qaeda's example.”⁴

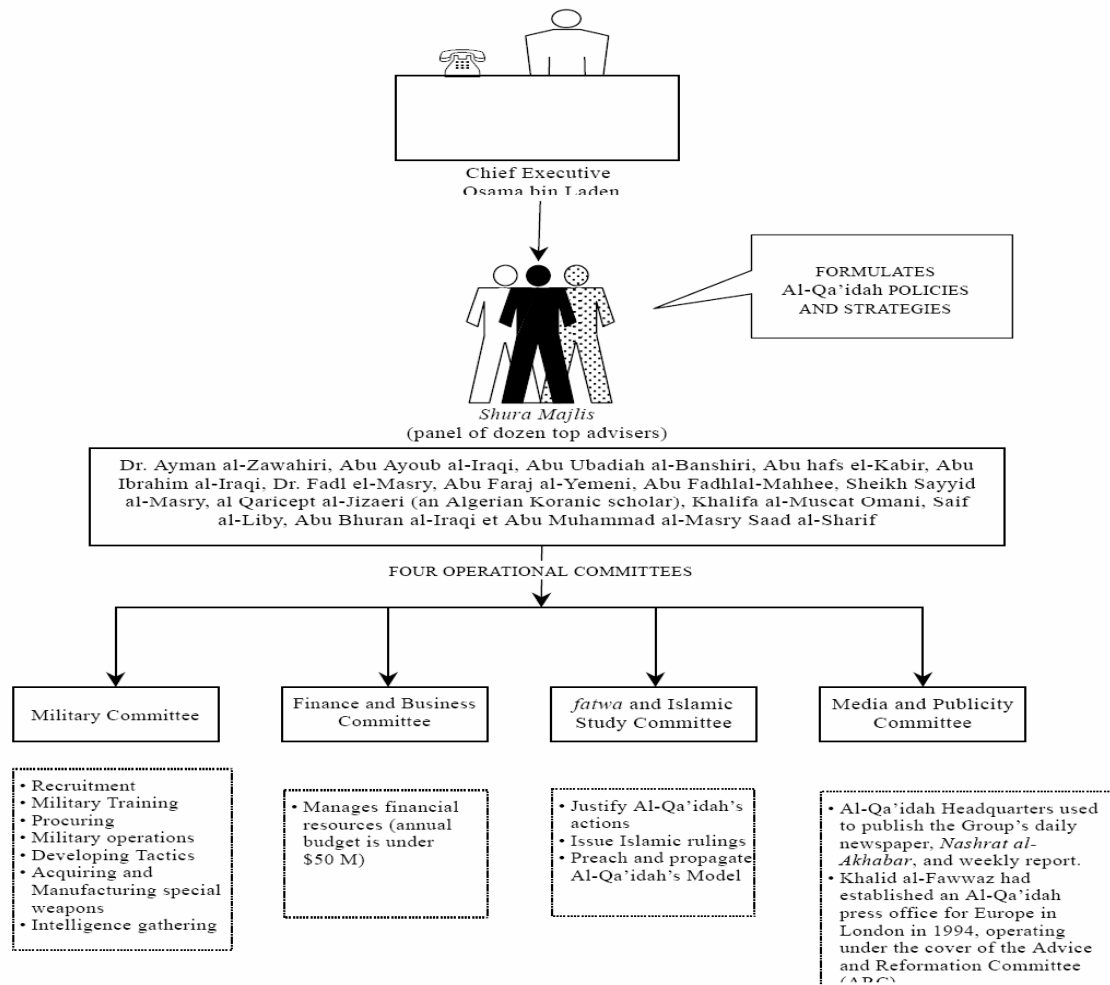


Figure 1: AQ Central Organizational Structure Circa 2001⁵

The primary source of U.S. understanding AQ central came from Jamal Ahmed Mohamed al Fadl, a Sudanese al Qaeda member who defected to the United States in 1996. His testimony during the United States v. Usama bin Laden, case No. S(7) 98 Cr. 1023 (S.D. N.Y.) on Feb. 6, 2001 is the source of Figure 1 and represents the most descriptive and widely used organizational structure for AQ central circa 2001.

⁴ James Phillips, “The Evolving Al-Qaeda Threat,” The Heritage Lectures, No. 928, Heritage Foundation Reports, March 17, 2006, accessed at: <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>, on: 15 February 2007.

⁵ UN Security Council, “S/2002/1050, Annex 2,” accessed at: <http://www.un.org>, on: 27 December 2006.

AQ central has proven to be an effective core element, which has carefully led and managed a centralized strategy. Since forming, “Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants operate as an umbrella group to recruit, train, finance, and logistically support a diverse network of Islamic extremists united by a fanatic ideology that is cloaked in religious zealotry.”⁶

The quantity and global dispersion of AQ’s affiliates speaks to their sustained persuasion and strength. According to Bruce Hoffman⁷, the second tier of AQ affiliates consists of groups such as “al-Ittihad al-Islami, the late Abu Musab Zarqawi's al Qaeda in Mesopotamia (formerly Jamaat al Tawhid wa'l Jihad), Asbat al-Ansar, Ansar al Islam, Islamic Army of Aden, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jemaah Islamiya, Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Salafist Group for Call and Combat, and the various Kashmiri Islamic groups based in Pakistan e.g., Harakat ul Mujahidin, Jaish-e- Mohammed, Laskar-e-Tayyiba, and Laskari Jhangvi. ”⁸

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan dealt AQ significant losses in 2001 and 2002. Since then, AQ has suffered steady losses. There has been an ongoing debate on the existing structure and strength of AQ. Largely built on assumptions due to the lack of definitive supporting evidence, the debate surrounding the status of the AQ force structure and organization will likely continue for some time.

⁶ Phillips.

⁷ Bruce Hoffman is a Professor at Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. He was formerly Corporate Chair in Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency at RAND Corporation and is considered to be a preeminent terrorism expert.

⁸ Bruce Hoffman, Statement before Committee on House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, February 14, 2007, accessed at: <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>, on: 21 February 2007.

AQ – Political (Ideological)

The Salafi movements (from *al-salaf al-salih*, Arabic for righteous ancestors, referring to the two first generations of Islam), which emerged at the end of the 19th century, sought to respond to the political, cultural, and military challenge of the West. The Salafis seek the “purification” of Islam by returning to the uncorrupted form that they believed was practiced in the time of the prophet Muhammad and his companions. Salafi movements are found throughout the Muslim world. Some have a strictly religious, nonpolitical agenda. Others have evolved into or influenced the modernist tendency in Islam. Yet others have become radicalized and given sustenance to violent and terrorist groups.⁹

AQ’s politics are firmly based on its religious ideology, which forms the foundation on which the organization stands. AQ’s ideology “is profoundly internationalist, attempting to contextualize local conflicts as part of a broader global struggle against apostasy and the infidel.”¹⁰ AQ’s political and ideological leadership resides within the shura, or consultation council, headed by Osama bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri. Within AQ “shura members are experienced jihad leaders charged with approving major terrorist attacks and issuing ‘fatwas’ or edicts. The shura members also have leadership roles in AQ’s four top committees.”¹¹

Ideology is reviewed, studied and decided upon within the AQ Islamic study committee. The Islamic study committee’s “primary responsibility is rulings on religious law. Additionally, it indoctrinates (or brainwashes) recruits on their interpretations of the Koran and the Hadith (tradition of the prophet). The fact that ideology is so central to [AQ] should not be surprising. On a purely material level, terrorist organizations are almost always outmatched by the government forces that they oppose.”¹²

⁹ Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Peter Chalk, C. Christine Fair, Theodore Karasik, Rollie Lal, Ian Lesser and David Thaler, *The Muslim World After 9/11*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2004), 15.

¹⁰ Rabasa, *Beyond Al Qaeda, Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement*, 7.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹² *Ibid.*, 8.

To understand how AQ justifies its actions, it is necessary to understand its religious beliefs. “Al-Salafiyya Al-Jihadiyya or Jihadist-salafism has become the widely accepted, albeit recent, term for the form of fundamentalist Islamic ideology embraced by AQ. Experts refer to the term as ‘respect for the sacred texts in their most literal form along with an absolute commitment to jihad’.”¹³ The Saudi Arabian columnist, Muhammad bin 'Abd Al-Latif Aal Al-Sheikh views the ideology of Jihadist-Salafism as “very similar to Nazism in terms of its causes and reasons. If the economic depression and the state of frustration that befell the world in 1930 were a cause for the spread of murderous Nazism, it may be said that the economic and cultural setback that has befallen the Arab and Muslim countries and the frustration suffered by Muslims today are also the primary cause for this murderous ideology.”¹⁴

Though most Salafi Muslims do not support terrorism or terrorist organizations, it is considered to be the most radical form of fundamentalist Islam. Furthermore, and of interest, pockets of Jihadist-Salafists exist that are more extreme in their hatred of the West than AQ. For bin Laden and AQ the world is broken down simply, the Umma (or Islamic world) and the infidels. To break that down further, the core of the Umma is the ‘Jihadist-Salafists’ or ‘true believers’ such as AQ; and the core of the infidels are the Zionist of Israel and the Crusaders of the West—especially the U.S.

AQ – Military

According to the head of one of the training camps in Afghanistan, some were chosen by unnamed Saudi sheikhs who had contacts with al Qaeda. Omari, for example, is believed to have been a student of a radical Saudi cleric named Sulayman al Alwan. His mosque, which is located in al Qassim Province, is

¹³ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 220.

¹⁴ The Middle East Research Institute, “Saudi Columnist: Jihadist Salafist Ideology is Like Nazism,” Special Dispatch Series 1007, October 17, 2005, accessed at: <http://memri.org>, on: 2 January 2007.

known among more moderate clerics as a “terrorist factory.” The province is at the very heart of the strict Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia.¹⁵

The AQ military committee supervises the recruitment and training of operators and the acquisition of weaponry. Slow at first in its build-up, AQ eventually worked toward a military disposition assembled with logical expectations of what it would take to survive in mind. A look at AQ’s critical growth period in the 1990’s, reveals a time when it “began to disperse its training camps and facilities. Bin Laden and Zawahiri appear to have expanded [AQ] not only to project power, but also to disperse assets, thereby making it more flexible and redundant and thus more difficult for its foes to strike a truly disabling blow.”¹⁶ U.S. operations in Afghanistan destroyed a large portion of the AQ training capabilities and facilities.

Since the loss of its extensive training complex in Afghanistan, [AQ] and its offspring have had to invent new ways of teaching their operational tradecraft to the next generation of jihadists. In Afghanistan, [AQ]—under the patronage of the Taliban—was able to train thousands of new recruits from a variety of backgrounds in both guerilla warfare and terrorist tactics ranging from small arms training to counter-interrogation techniques with relative impunity. The creation of the 11-volume *Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad*, acquired by U.S. intelligence in 1999, was designed to serve as a step-by-step do-it-yourself guide for the up-and-coming terrorist to augment what he learned in the Afghan training camps, and to educate those who could not make it to the camps. This publication has served as the primary text for training new recruits in an era when training camps are harder to set up.¹⁷

The success of the OEF forced the AQ military committee to turn its focus in order to rebuild and remain viable. During the period following “the U.S. operations in Afghanistan, Yousef Al-Ayyiri’s importance within the AQ military committee rose significantly. As a firm proponent of the international jihad against America, he

¹⁵ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *911 Commission Report*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), 233.

¹⁶ Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies’ Eyes – Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*, (Washington DC: Brassey’s, Inc, 2002), 178.

¹⁷ Rabasa, *Beyond Al Qaeda, Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement*, 41.

refocused his efforts primarily on two main causes: using the Internet as a vehicle to recruit and propagandize on behalf of [AQ], and setting up covert training camps for terror recruits inside Saudi Arabia, similar to the remote base that Ayyiri had once presided over in Afghanistan.”¹⁸ Considering the worldwide pressure that the U.S. and its allies confronted AQ with during the first two years of OEF, Al-Ayyiri’s efforts to reinvigorate AQ’s military disposition was remarkable. The discovery of “the presence of these camps — and Yousef Al-Ayyiri’s key role in creating them — was confirmed in an electronic communiqué issued in late December [2003] by a group calling itself ‘al Qaeda’s Military Committee in the Arabian Peninsula.’ The ‘Cutting Edge’ manual was given its name ‘for the great efforts of Sheikh Yousef Al-Ayyiri... One of his last blessed deeds was to establish several training camps in [Saudi Arabia] which several of the hero mujahideen have come from.’”¹⁹ Al-Ayyiri was killed in 2003 during a confrontation with the Saudi military.

After his death, an on-line [AQ] Military magazine called “Al-Battar Training Camp – A Magazine Published by the Military Committee of the Mujahideen in the Arabian Peninsula” was introduced on the internet. ‘Al-Battar’ was Al-Ayyiri’s nickname. AQ’s intentions for the recruiting, brainwashing and militarizing Muslim youth was published in the first edition: “The basic idea is to spread military culture among the youth with the aim of filling the vacuum that the enemies of the religion have been seeking to expand for a long time. Allah willing, the magazine will be simple and easy, and in it, my Muslim brother, you will find basic lessons in the framework of a military training program, beginning with programs for sports training, through types of light weapons and guerilla group actions in the cities and mountains, and [including] important points in security and intelligence, so that you will be able ... to fulfill the religious obligation that Allah has set upon you...”²⁰

¹⁸ Evan Kohlmann, “A Saudi Home: Al Qaeda in the Kingdom,” National Review Online, February 9, 2004, accessed at: <http://www.nationalreview.com>, on: 30 December 2006.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The Middle East Research Institute, “The Al-Battar Training Camp: The First Issue of Al-Qa’ida’s Online Military Magazine,” Special Dispatch Series 637, January 6, 2004, accessed at: <http://memri.org>, on: 29 December 2006.

AQ recruits new personnel through a progressive screening process. The organization “is believed to have recruiters that travel to or are embedded in radical mosques, where they identify and befriend promising candidates. Often the candidates are selected to travel to foreign countries such as Pakistan or Yemen for religious education. Once there, they are isolated from former friends and family and offered more rigorous training for jihad.”²¹ AQ’s recruitment similarities when compared to that nation-state armies is remarkable. Isolating and indoctrinating candidates is an effective, time-tested method for creating soldiers from groups of young men.

AQ – Economics

The AQ finance and business committee supervises investments and corporate holdings. The members of the finance and business committee “also supervise monetary payments from Middle Eastern countries in exchange for bin Laden’s promise not to establish [AQ] cells within their borders, which is nothing more than extortion similar to mafia ‘protection money’ paid by business owners in some U.S. cities. Other means by which terrorists acquire funding include state-sponsorship, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and establishing front businesses or ‘charity’ organizations.”²²

It has been long believed that bin Laden had a personal fortune of \$300 million and that his family is worth more than \$5 billion. To meet the demands of AQ’s business and operations costs, “bin Laden receives funding from wealthy Muslims who share his beliefs, wealthy Muslim dilettantes who contribute lavishly to ‘Islamic causes’ without caring how the money is spent, regular collections taken up at mosques across the

²¹ Phillips.

²² Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, “Financial Actions Against Terrorists,” accessed at: <http://www.armscontrolcenter.org>, on 25 February 2007.

Muslim world, Islamic nongovernmental organizations, and some portion of the immense profits from the trafficking of heroin in South Asia.”²³

AQ has adapted its banking and monetary transfer methods in order to elude the U.S. and international community. Stopping the flow of AQ funding has proven to be difficult and a point of concern.

Initially, bin Laden’s banking activities and practices were less sophisticated than they have since become. As [AQ] operations grew in size and the organization became more notorious, bin Laden deftly began to change his banking and financial practices due to the spotlight of western interests. Much like the Mafia in the U.S., he started to launder [AQ] funds through the international banking system. One bin Laden associate, Jamal Ahmed al-Fadl, who had handled financial transactions for [AQ], testified that [AQ] had used a half dozen accounts at the Shamal bank; one account was in the name of bin Laden. He described a 1994 incident in which the Shamal bank was used by [AQ] to provide al-Fadl \$100,000 in U.S. \$100 dollar bills which he was directed to take on a plane to an individual in Jordan, which he did. This testimony shows that, in 1994, the Shamal bank maintained accounts used by bin Laden and [AQ] and was supplying bin Laden operatives with funds.²⁴

The success of U.S. actions taken to seize AQ finances resulted in a shift in its financial networking and monetary transfer methods. In reaction AQ has “developed new sources of financing, further diversified its resource base, moved an even larger amount of transactions through the informal hawala system, and increased its dependence on non-monetary barter transactions. For example, it now goes through a much more sophisticated process when soliciting funds via the Internet. Rather than just publishing web sites that openly solicit money and resources, [AQ] infiltrates legitimate charitable organizations and asks for money through the web; engages in online fraud, identity theft,

²³ Anonymous, 29.

²⁴ Carl Levin, U.S. Senator (D-MI), Testimony before the Senate Banking Committee during a hearing on the Administration's National Money Laundering Strategy for 2001, 26 September 2001, accessed at: <http://www.fas.org>, on 28 December 2006.

and other Internet crimes; and then uses those proceeds to fund their activities.”²⁵ AQ also uses the hawala system (Figure 2), which is an informal value transfer system based on performance and honor of a network of money brokers. A customer approaches a hawala broker in one city and gives a sum of money to be transferred to a recipient in another city. The hawala broker calls another hawala broker in the recipient's city, gives disposition instructions of the funds (minus a small commission), and promises to settle the debt at a later date.

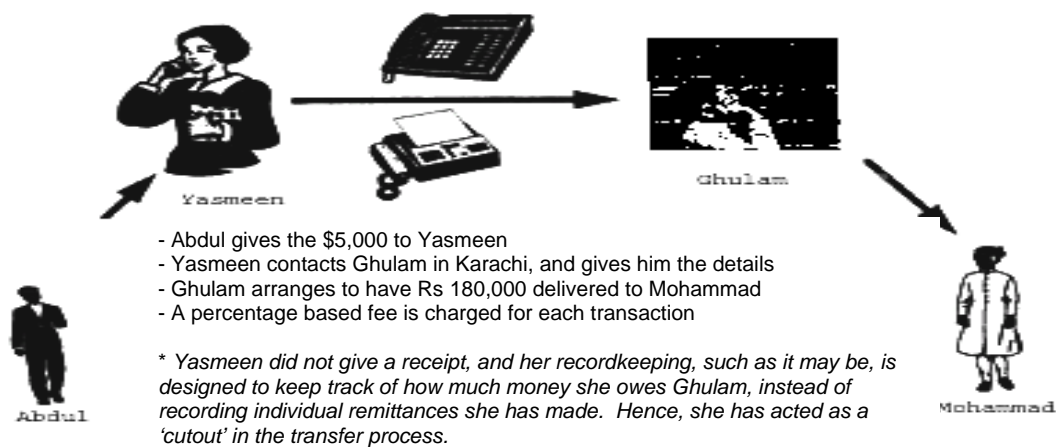


Figure 2: The Hawala Money Transferring and Laundering System²⁶

Charitable donations and other means of fund raising used by AQ cannot compare to the kind of money that can be made through business. In fact, “a comparison with even the most generous estimates of [AQ’s] financing—approximately \$1 billion per year—suggests that terrorist financing is simply dwarfed by drug money. While some evidence exists which points to AQ involvement in the poppy and opium trade in Afghanistan, there is no information suggesting it is involved in any other lucrative drug markets, such as the cocaine markets in South America or the drug markets in the Golden

²⁵ Rabasa, *Beyond Al Qaeda, Part 1, The Global Jihadist Movement*, 57.

²⁶ Interpol General Secretariat, “The hawala alternative remittance system and its role in money laundering,” January 2000, accessed at: <http://www.interpol.int>, on: 15 February 2007.

Triangle.”²⁷ As the U.S. and international community continue to diminish AQ’s banking and finance, the lure of the highly profitable, illicit drug trade may be a financial source it is forced to consider.

AQ – Society

One of the speakers at the event was ten-year-old Hamza bin Laden, another of Osama’s sons, who had written a poem which read: ‘I am warning America that its people will face terrible consequences if they chase my father. Fighting America is the base of faith.’²⁸

Sigmund Freud said that religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from the fact that it falls in with our instinctual desires. That insight provides an interesting lens through which the motivations of the true believers of the Jihadist-Salafi movement, and in-deed the much greater Muslim society that tolerates their actions, can be viewed.

In an effort to make the cause for war and bring together the concerns of all Muslim people, AQ claims that “just wars are waged by a group or people whose will has been plundered and who is repressed and oppressed, against the invading and plundering force or against a tyrant. The goal is to remove the oppression and the aggression and to fight for the sake of Allah in order to impose Shari’a law and so that the word of Allah will reign supreme. Examples of this type of fighting are [in] the land of the two holy places, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Chechnya, Kashmir, the Philippines, and so on.”²⁹

The conditions and causative factors that have led to the current difficulties in the Middle-East and Muslim world are plain to see. Poverty, lack of governance, oppression, unhealthy living conditions, lack of education other than religious education are a few significant factors. In difficult circumstances such as those, many turn to religion as an

²⁷ Rabasa, *Beyond Al Qaeda, Part I, The Global Jihadist Movement*, 59.

²⁸ Adam Robinson, *Bin Laden - Behind the Mask of the Terrorist* (New York: Arcade Publishing, Inc, 2001), 271.

²⁹ The Middle East Research Institute.

escape in search of a source of inner-strength. So where does the phenomenon of condoning violence in the name of religion come from? In his book “Just War and Jihad: Positioning the Question of Religious Violence,” R. Joseph Hoffmann concludes that “the question, rather, is what one is to do with the recognition that to the extent religion is not violent, it means a curbing of religion’s natural symbolic appetite for images of the violent, for violent action—for war, capital punishment, and revenge against one’s enemies—by suppression, erasure, or simply disbelief.”³⁰ Many practitioners of “contemporary Islamism, however, hold that Islam is now under attack, and therefore Jihad is now a war of defense, and as such has become not only a collective duty but an individual duty without restrictions or limitations. That is, to the Islamists, Jihad is a total, all-encompassing duty to be carried out by all Muslims – men and women, young and old. All infidels, without exception, are to be fought and annihilated, and no weapons or types of warfare are barred. Furthermore, according to them, current Muslim rulers allied with the West are considered apostates and infidels.”³¹ Influencing the greater Muslim society is clearly the intention of radicalized Islamists such as AQ.

AQ – Informational

We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. . . . [W]e are in a media battle for the hearts and minds of our umma.

Ayman al-Zawahiri, July 2005

The AQ media and publicity committee supervises propaganda, press releases and websites. The increased successful exploitation of the internet marks one of AQ’s more

³⁰ R. Joseph Hoffman, Judith Lichtenburg, J. Harold Ellens, Charles K. Bellinger, Reuven Firestone, Hecotr Avalos, Bahar Davary, Robert B. Tapp, Pauletta Otis, Regina M. Schwartz, Joyce E. Salisbury, Carol Delaney, Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez and Laura Purdy, *The Just War and Jihad: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by R. Joseph Hoffman (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2006), 62.

³¹ The Middle East Research Institute, “Contemporary Islamist Ideology Authorizing Genocidal,” Special Report, 25 January 27, 2004, accessed at: <http://memri.org>, on: 29 December 2006.

significant achievements in the months and years since 9/11. AQ conducts three essential tasks key to its continued success and survival. These tasks include communications with its affiliates and members, raising funds and recruiting.

Bin Laden made early investments in the internet as a form of communication. An observation into his focus on getting his message out was made by Adam Robinson in his 2001 book “Bin Laden – Behind the Mask of the Terrorist” in which he cited “the technology-aware Osama spends a great deal of time alone in his communications [center], preparing messages and encrypted blueprints of attack plans, inserting them into photographs, and posting them on the internet on pre-arranged web pages. It is a simple, yet effective system that allows him to talk to his worldwide network instantly, without [AQ] either maintaining its own network or using more traditional forms of communication that are open to eavesdropping.”³² Osama had an eye for talent to expand his network and increase the operational efficacy of AQ and so he “recruited a number of Muslim IT professionals during his Khartoum years. They were political radicals themselves, of course, but were drawn to Sudan by generous packages that could compete with the lure of Silicon Valley.”³³ Indeed, the early investments, and continued improvements to exploit the internet have been a source of agility and endurance for AQ.

AQ – Infrastructure

As a result of the U.S. reaction to the events of 9/11 and the follow-on operations in Afghanistan, AQ has been denied any known basing, housing and support for any significant period of time. That which remains of AQ’s infrastructure is comprised of

³² Robinson, 267-268.

³³ Ibid., 268.

small, dispersed safe houses and compounds in locations that are kept secret from U.S. and WOT allies' intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.

Prior to encamping in Afghanistan, under the care of its political and ideological ally the Taliban, AQ spent five important years in the Sudan.

From April 1991 to May 1996, Osama bin Laden, along with hundreds of [AQ] members, lived in Khartoum laying the foundations for his formidable organization. At a time when Islamic fundamentalists and veterans of the Afghan jihad were 'personae non gratae' in most of the Muslim world, Sudan was the only country that opened its doors to them, providing them with the perfect environment in which to continue their activities. Protected by the most ideologically driven factions of the Sudanese regime that gained power in a bloodless 1989 coup, [AQ] ran training camps, established operational ties with other terrorist organizations, conducted business activities, and planned attacks in other countries. Although their time in Africa was beneficial to [AQ], for Sudan it bore heavy economic and political costs.³⁴

After leaving Sudan, AQ started growing more rapidly. It had "benefited immensely from the experience and contacts it developed in Sudan and grew to be the world's most dangerous terrorist organization. [AQ's] five years in Sudan show just how much a terrorist organization can benefit from receiving state support and sanctuary."³⁵

The U.S. stance on "harboring terrorist organizations" toward nation-states has been an effective method of international coercion that has forced AQ and associated organizations deeper underground. AQ now relies on its ability to operate and survive in a dispersed and surreptitious manner.

AQ – Strategy

AQ intends to destroy Israel, expel U.S. and other western interests from the Mid East, and replace Mid East secular governments with Islamic governments or "shuras."

³⁴ Al Nakhlah: The Fletcher School Online Journal for issues related to Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization, "Fall 2006 edition," 1, accessed at: <http://fletcher.tufts.edu>, on: 26 December 2006.

³⁵ Ibid, 11.

Its strategic ends is the resurgence of the caliphate³⁶ and the worldwide spread of Islam within 100 years. Bin Laden prefers to see himself as a historical character in Islam's struggle to re-emerge as a worldwide power. In his mind, he is "not just a terrorist, but an Islamic revolutionary. There is a method in his madness. He seeks not only to kill Americans, but ultimately to overthrow every government in the Muslim world... His ideological fantasy is to unify the entire Muslim world in one state, ruled under his harsh and radical brand of Islam."³⁷

The way through which AQ intends to achieve this is by protracted warfare, utilizing primarily terrorist tactics, against the U.S. and West, Israel and secular Mid-east governments. The aim is to eventually gain overwhelming popular support by influencing more and more Sunni Muslims that the true path to religious glory is by the way of the Salafi-Jihadist. Bin Laden first learned to be patient in war and focus on the will of the people while fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan where "the Mujahideen understood that guerrilla war is a contest of endurance and national will. Battlefield victory is almost irrelevant, provided that the guerrilla survives to fight the next of a thousand battles before passing the torch to his children."³⁸

AQ's means include trained personnel, equipment, infrastructure, support and funding to maintain and preserve their cause. For AQ, physical separation and compartmentalization of cells and operational secrecy are effective and logical methods for survival against more powerful and resourceful nation-states.

³⁶ Caliphate: The political-religious state comprising the Muslim community, and the lands and peoples, under its dominion in the centuries following the death (AD 632) of the Prophet Muhammad. Ruled by a caliph (Arabic *khalifah*, 'successor'), who held temporal and sometimes a degree of spiritual authority, the empire of the Caliphate grew rapidly through conquest during its first two centuries.

³⁷ Phillips.

³⁸ Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War* (Quantico: USMC Studies and Analysis Division, 1998), 399.

AQ – Center of Gravity

AQ's strategic center of gravity is its Jihadist-Salafi ideology. Understanding that the Salafi movement has existed within Sunni Muslim society since the late 19th century, it is easy to conclude that those teachings and writings will be difficult, if not impossible, to permanently eradicate. What remains is the core of AQ leading its current Jihad through violent actions and messages designed to discredit and eventually destroy Israel, the U.S. and the rest of the West and moderate Muslim governments. To ultimately defeat them, the U.S. and allies must exploit them for what they are, because AQ's "greatest vulnerability is that their ultimate political solution—an ultra-conservative interpretation of sharia-based governance spanning the Muslim world—[which] is unpopular with the vast majority of Muslims."³⁹

AQ – Current Disposition

AQ has clearly been on the run since the U.S. began to wage its War on Terrorism, but U.S. officials "point to the prospect that the terrorist network is gaining in strength despite more than five years of a sustained American-led campaign to degrade its capabilities."⁴⁰ Others further speculate that, "successful operations against [AQ's] core have created new problems in the sense that AQ is no longer a hierarchical organization run by bin Laden. Rather, the terrorist threat has evolved into what some experts refer to as "franchised" terrorism. In this new phase, previously identified AQ leaders serve as examples and provide ideological rather than organizational and material

³⁹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Declassified Key Judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate 'Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States' dated April 2006," accessed at: <http://www.dni.gov>, on 27 September 2006.

⁴⁰ Mark Mazzetti and David Rohde, "Al Qaeda's leaders rebuilding network: New camps and signs of bin Laden," *The International Herald Tribune*, February 20, 2007, accessed at: <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>, on: 25 February 2007.

support to terrorist operatives around the world.”⁴¹ While a more dispersed disposition, less centralized control and strategic fracturing is a good rough indicator of U.S. CT successes, increased numbers of like minded, anti-U.S. terrorist organizations is not.

AQ – Summary

AQ is a non-state affiliated, networked terrorist organization whose resilience can be attributed to the agile and clandestine nature in which it operates. It relies on centralized planning, organizing and tasking from within its four operational committees, and decentralized training and operational execution supported by its vast horizontal structure of dispersed cells and associated organizations. Its effective use of the internet for communications, fund raising and recruiting, along with its ability to transfer money outside of the view of the international banking system, further support its agile and clandestine nature. AQ’s strategic goal of the resurgence of the caliphate governed by their strict Salafi interpretation of Islam is its source of strength and its greatest vulnerability, because most Muslims do not concur with their ideology or approve of their tactics. Still, AQ has set the standard for information age terrorist organizations. The next chapter will look into the growing threat of Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations.

⁴¹ U.S. House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *al-Qaeda: The Many Faces of an Extremist Threat*, U.S House of Representatives Report 109-615 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), 6.

CHAPTER 2

A PROSPECTIVE ON ISLAMIC TERRORIST NETWORKS

Although we cannot measure the extent of the spread with precision, a large body of all-source reporting indicates that activists identifying themselves as jihadists, although a small percentage of Muslims, are increasing in both number and geographic dispersion.⁴²

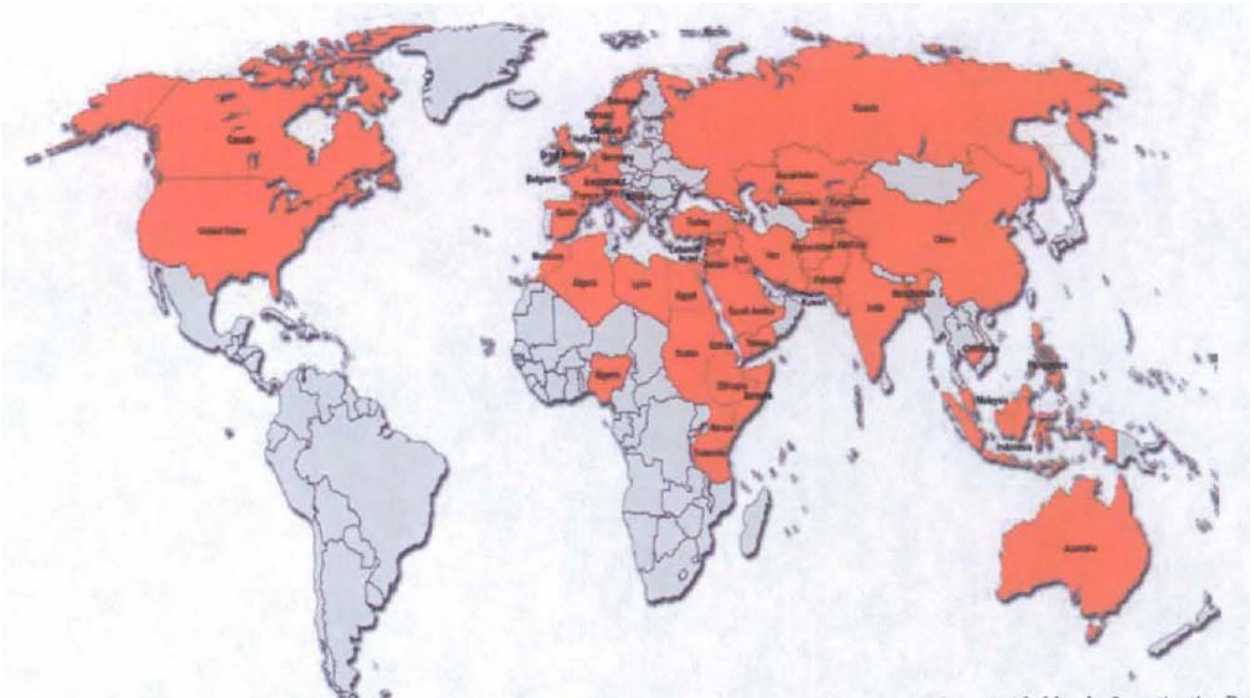


Figure 3: Presence of Radical Islamist Cells 1996-2006⁴³

For the U.S., and indeed the Western world, Islamic Fundamentalist terrorist organizations have posed a growing and significant threat for some time. The June 2000 “National Commission on Terrorism Report” noted that the U.S. is not just fighting a war against AQ, but against numerous radicalized cells and organizations worldwide. While AQ has led the way in the last two decades, the report further noted that “if [AQ] and bin Laden were to disappear tomorrow, the U.S. would still face potential terrorist threats

⁴² Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

⁴³ U.S. House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 7.

from a growing number of groups opposed to perceived American hegemony.”⁴⁴ One key concern is AQ’s aptitude for raising funds, personnel and support worldwide. Years of recruiting supporters has resulted in an imposing conglomerate, and “as long as AQ can [continue to] spread its ideology to other groups, the movement will continue to grow and threaten to change the way the Islamic world is governed.”⁴⁵

The jihadist movement is supported by the exploitation of broad Muslim perceptions of the U.S. and West, including: (1) entrenched grievances, such as corruption, injustice, and fear of Western domination, leading to anger, humiliation, and a sense of powerlessness; (2) the Iraq jihad; (3) the slow pace of real and sustained economic, social, and political reforms in many Muslim majority nations; and (4) pervasive anti-US sentiment among most Muslims...”⁴⁶ Islamic jihadist organizations tie their radicalized messages to those negative perceptions of the West to capitalize on recruitment and support. Furthermore, and similar to AQ, “the strategic ends of modern Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations are inextricably tied to their ideological goals. Their asymmetric ways are constantly morphing and are seemingly limited only by the imaginations of their planners and operators. One common thread is the audacity with which they execute their operations. Per se, these violent non-state actors do not engage in ‘modern’ warfare. They are not strictly post-modern or pre-modern, but rather reflect characteristics that precede the birth of the nation-state in 1648 while embracing elements of 20th century total wars.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ L. Paul Bremer, Chairman, “National Commission on Terrorism Report,” June 7, 2000. Accessed at: <http://nsaarchive.chadwyck.com>, on 10 January 2007.

⁴⁵ U.S. House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 6.

⁴⁶ Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

⁴⁷ Troy S. Thomas and William D. Casebeer, *Violent Systems: Defeating Terrorists, Insurgents, and other Non-State Adversaries*, (USAF Academy: USAF Institute for National Security Studies, 2004), 4.

Madrassas and the Jihadist Movement

The only true faith in God's sight is Islam. Those to whom the Scriptures were given disagreed among themselves, through insolence, only after knowledge had been vouchsafed them. He that denies God's revelations should know that swift is God's reckoning.

The Koran, Sura 3



Figure 4: Students Eating at the Haqqania Madrassa ⁴⁸

The most significant source of teaching radical Muslim dogma exists within Islamic religious schools known as 'madrassas.' Much like the schools of any religious faith, at madrassas young men devote their youths to religious practice and study. Logically, if the religious doctrine of a particular madrassa is based on moderate Islamic theology, then it can be viewed as a school that espouses co-existence with the West. Conversely, the concerns of the U.S. and Western world should be focused on madrassas that advocate Salafism or Wahhabism. Just as future U.S. and Western leaders are educated and trained in the finest Western universities, so too are future Jihadists educated and trained in their schools.

⁴⁸ Photograph by Laurent Van Der Stockt, "Inside Jihad U: The Education of a Holy Warrior," New York Times Magazine, June 25, 2000.

In his June 2000 NY Times Magazine article on madrassas, Jeff Goldberg

observed:

There are no world history courses...or science labs...The Haqqania madrassa is, in fact, a jihad factory. This does not make it unique in Pakistan. There are one million students studying in the country's 10,000 or so madrassas, & militant Islam is at the core of most of these schools... The secret...is embodied in...the hundreds of thousands of young men... at madrassas across Pakistan and Afghanistan. These are poor and impressionable boys kept entirely ignorant of the world and, for that matter, largely ignorant of all but one interpretation of Islam. They are the perfect jihad machines.⁴⁹

The Internet and the Future of Terrorist Activities

The Internet is the key issue, it erases the frontiers between the dar al-Islam and the dar al-Kufr. It allows the propagation of a universal norm, with an Internet Sharia and fatwa system.⁵⁰

Gilles Kepel
Professor, Institut d'Études Politiques

Terrorist organizations will increasingly become proficient on the use and exploitation of the internet. The internet is currently the most effective way by which “the global jihadist movement—which includes al Qaeda, affiliated and independent terrorist groups, and emerging networks and cells—is spreading and adapting to counterterrorism efforts.”⁵¹ It is estimated that there are 5000 websites devoted to jihad on the internet. A virtual battlefield in the GWOT already exists and is likely to expand. The growing international concern on the future and potential of cyber-terrorism was summarized by the International Atomic Energy Agency in 2002:

⁴⁹ Jeffrey Goldberg, “Inside Jihad U: The Education of a Holy Warrior,” New York Times Magazine, June 25, 2000.

⁵⁰ Lawrence Wright, “The Terror Web,” The New Yorker Online, accessed at: <http://www.newyorker.com>, on: 2 January 2007.

-In Dar al-Islam, the citizenry abide by the ordinances, rules, edicts, and assembly of Islam. The Muslim state guarantees the safety of life, property, and religious status (only if the religion is not idol-atrous) of minorities (*ahl al-dhimma*) provided they have submitted to Muslim control.

-Dar al-Kufr refers to the ‘house of infidels’ or ‘domain of disbelief.’ It is a term used by Muhammad to refer to the Quraish-dominated society of Mecca between his flight to Medina and his triumphant return.

⁵¹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

The sophistication of the modern nation state and its inevitable dependency on computer-based information and communication technologies renders the state more vulnerable. Information has become a strategic resource, as valuable and influential in the post-industrial age as capital and labor were in the industrial age. Information Technology offers new opportunities to terrorists. A terrorist organization can reap low-risk, highly visible payoffs by attacking the information infrastructure... Also, the use of the Internet offers the terrorists groups the possibility of conducting large-scale misinformation campaigns. This new phenomenon 'internet-war' can be simply defined as the process of disrupting, damaging or modifying what the international society knows or thinks about itself. These activities could concentrate on international public opinions and they might involve propaganda, psychological campaigns, political and cultural subversion, deception of, or interference with, local media, infiltration of computer networks and databases and efforts to promote dissident or opposition movements across computer networks.⁵²

The internet has emboldened the terrorist organizations by providing a means of communication that is difficult to trace, and AQ's exploitation of the internet has already become the standard. Similar to other modernizing phenomena, the Director of National Intelligence concludes that "the radicalization process is occurring more quickly, more widely, and more anonymously in the Internet age, raising the likelihood of surprise attacks by unknown groups whose members and supporters may be difficult to pinpoint... [Terrorist organizations] will increasingly use the Internet to communicate, propagandize, recruit, train, and obtain logistical and financial support."⁵³

Ideological Influence of Radical Islam – Past, Present, Future

The inter-relationships through which religious ideologies are passed down, modified and updated are often convoluted and difficult to trace. Learning more about the messengers is useful in tracing time and space, which could lead to better understanding of the geographic and sociological factors behind Salifism. At the U.S.

⁵² International Atomic Energy Agency, *Measures to Prevent, Intercept and Respond to Illicit Uses of Nuclear Material and Radioactive Sources* (Vienna: International Atomic Energy Agency, 2002), 51, accessed at: <http://www.pub.iaea.org>, on 26 December, 2006.

⁵³ Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Center authors of the "Militant Ideology Atlas" used a technique called 'citation analysis' which "identifies the most influential authors among Jihadi ideologues. Not surprisingly, the most influential Muslim authors are largely scholars known for their conservative and uncompromising interpretations of Islamic law and theology. Most of these scholars are also highly influential among mainstream Salafis, which reinforces the notion that the Jihadi Movement is a violent subset of the broader Salafi Movement."⁵⁴

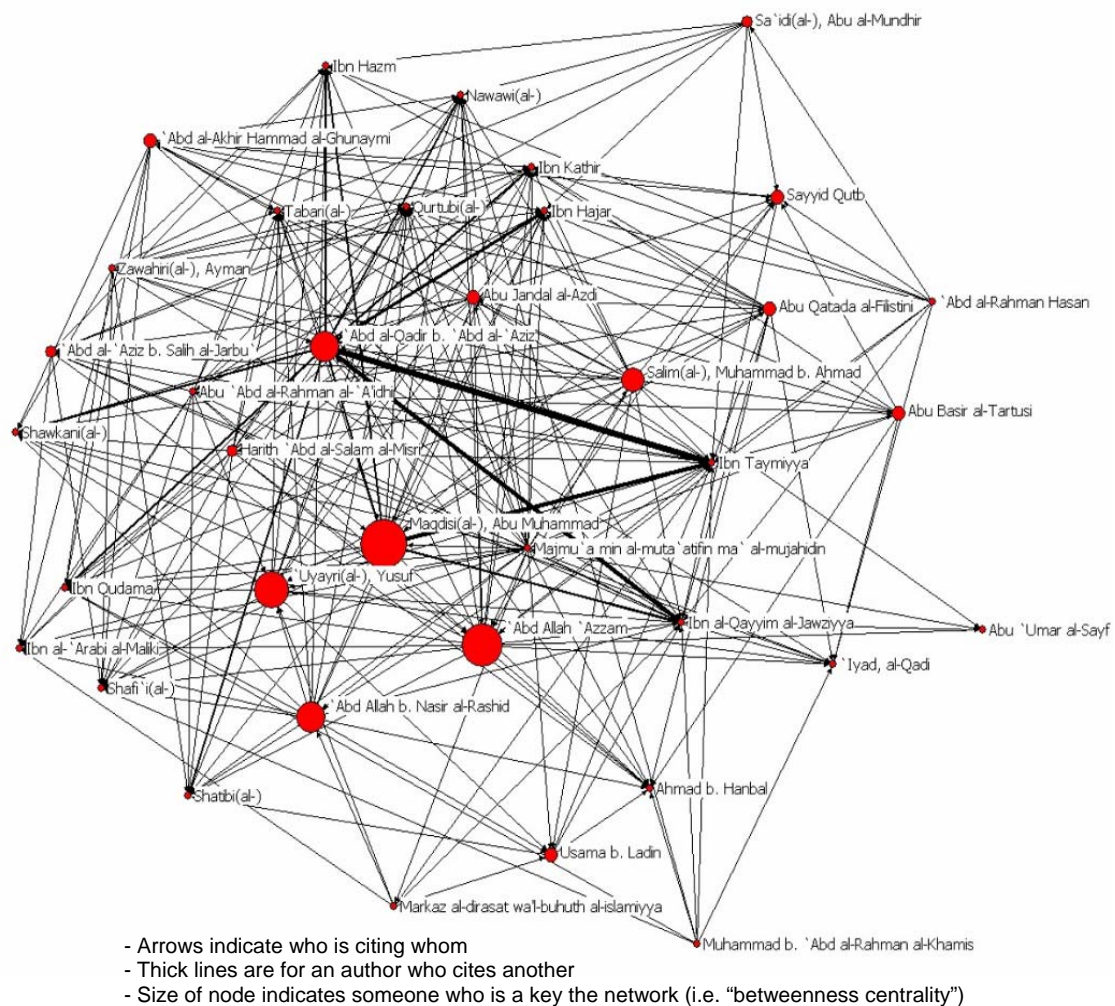


Figure 5: Ideological Influence Matrix⁵⁵

⁵⁴ U.S. Military Academy Combating Terrorism Center, "Militant Ideology Atlas, Executive Report," William McCants, Editor & Project Director, November 2006, 7.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 12. (Appendix 1)

Figure 5 provides a visual representation of influential Salafi leaders and scholars and their relationships to one another. Tracing past leaders to present and future leaders is key to gaining a better insight on the population bases that are most likely to be supportive to Jihadist-Salafism.

After investigating AQ and a prospective on the global dispersion and root causes of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, the next chapter will review the foundation by which the U.S. defends its national interests.

CHAPTER 3

THE U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY APPARATUS

We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.

Albert Einstein

The U.S. defends itself against foreign threats through the employment of a large and multifaceted national security apparatus. The structure through which all the elements of national power are projected is institutionally designed and prepared to oppose nation-states. At its core is the President, the National Security Council (NSC), the Department of State (DoS) and the Department of Defense (DoD). Various other agencies and departments from the interagency have roles and missions in either external or internal defense. The national security apparatus is deliberate and powerful due to its size and capabilities. It is not agile.

The Office of the President of the United States

The U.S. Constitution grants general powers to the President in regards to foreign affairs. The office represents the only official elected by a national constituency, and carries the great responsibility of defending the nation and its interests. As specified in the Constitution:

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the Executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices...⁵⁶

⁵⁶ U.S. Constitution, (Philadelphia, 1787), article 2, section 2.

Presidential involvement in foreign affairs has become more complex in the centuries since the framers put pen to paper. The agencies and departments that serve the President have grown in size, number and complexity.

The foundation for the current U.S. national security apparatus was formed by the National Security Act of 1947 (NSA 47). Since then, incremental changes in national security have been made by way of laws, Presidential Decision Directives, National Security Presidential Directives, and organizational differences in Presidential administrations. Improvements in national security have resulted in high level interagency consultation and policy recommendations to the President, which will be further addressed in a paragraph on the National Security Council System.

The National Security Act of 1947

The backdrop of NSA 47 began with the emergence of the new superpowers. At the end of World War II, a victorious U.S. was pitted against its former ally, the Soviet Union. To expand its influence and become the dominant nation in the world, the Soviet government used all elements of its national power to overcome the U.S. in what was to become the Cold War.

NSA 47 ended years of intense debate over the future of the military and national defense. At the center of the debate were President Truman, the Department of War and the Department of the Navy. The dispute peaked when Navy Secretary James Forrestal threatened to resign. In October 1945, Ferdinand Eberstadt, a friend of Secretary Forrestal, completed a study in which he suggested that a National Security Council (NSC) should be the keystone of organizational structure for U.S. national security with

statutory responsibility for forming and coordinating policies in political and military fields.⁵⁷ The motive behind Eberstadt's report was not a well guarded secret. The Navy department was engaged in what it perceived to be a fight for its existence. It is understandable that "executives, in trying to maintain their agencies (and their positions in them), worry about retaining control over their turf... No agency has or can have complete autonomy, but all struggle to get and keep as much as they can."⁵⁸ Navy leadership viewed unification of the military services as a challenge to its budget, training and collective decision-making principles and values.

On the opposing side, President Truman and the War Department were suggesting unification of the military services. The President sought control and constraints on the military budget. The Army believed unification would provide it with a greater share of limited post-war funding in the face of a new Air Force department.

In "Flawed by Design, The Evolution of the CIA, JSC and NSC," Amy Zegart's observed that "two features of American democracy create a bureaucracy that is unavoidably flawed at birth. First, the American separation-of-powers system requires political compromise—and compromise allows agency opponents to sabotage aspects of structural design. Second, elections inject uncertainty into the game. Because today's winners may be tomorrow's losers, they insulate agencies from all future political control by legislating counterproductive detailed rules, regulations, and requirements."⁵⁹

From the release of the Eberstadt study in October 1945 until May 1946, the debate over the future of U.S. national security was at its highpoint. On May 13, 1946,

⁵⁷ Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS and NSC* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 64.

⁵⁸ James Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (Cambridge: Basic Books, 1989), 28.

⁵⁹ Zegart, 18.

President Truman met with Secretary of War Patterson and Secretary of the Navy Forrestal and requested that they create a compromise plan. Settled within weeks, their negotiated agreement included a National Security Council system, three military departments (Army, Navy and Air Force), and a defense secretary. Though the debate continued, particularly over the authority of the defense secretary, the issue was settled with the signing of the National Security Act on July 26, 1947.

The most significant results of NSA 47 were the formation of a NSC system, a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Here it should be noted that “if anything, American history tells us that government agencies are sticky. Once they arise, they become very difficult to change.”⁶⁰ The JCS structure led to disjointed, stove-piped military services until the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 forced a joint military approach on the JCS and DoD. The CIA never managed to centralize intelligence. In fact, per the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, the Director of the CIA now reports to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) who is responsible for ensuring that information is shared amongst various agencies within the intelligence community. In centralizing intelligence efforts, “the DNI will have the authority to order the collection of new intelligence, to ensure the sharing of information among agencies and to establish common standards for the intelligence community's personnel.”⁶¹

⁶⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁶¹ George W. Bush, “President Signs Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act,” accessed at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov>, on: 28 October 2006.

The National Security Council System

The NSC system includes the NSC and the NSC staff. The organization and process brings to bear refined analysis from a broad spectrum of national experts representing all elements of national power. Armed with the information and recommendations of the NSC staff, the President is better able to make informed national security decisions and policies. The system is designed to serve the President.

Though each President has marked the NSC with some sort of change, the most significant and long lasting changes to the NSC system were made by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. President Eisenhower created the National Security Advisor (NSA) to head the NSC staff and serve as his primary advisor on national security affairs. The NSA is not subject to Senate confirmation—a detail that favors the executive. President Kennedy created the Situation Room for the Bay of Pigs crisis. Although Kennedy and Eisenhower made the most significant and long lasting changes to the NSC, “each president recreated and reinvented the system in his own image.”⁶²

In the current administration, the NSA oversees a NSC staff of approximately 225 members consisting of political appointees (frequently experts from think tanks and academia), senior professionals on detail from Executive Branch departments, and military officers. The senior interagency group is the Principals Committee (PC). The PC for national security affairs consists of the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Treasury, the NSA, the DNI, and the Chairman of the JCS (CJCS). The Deputies Committee (deputy/under secretary-level) are the senior sub-cabinet group tasked with monitoring the work of the interagency process and identifying unresolved policy issues for the Principals Committee. Policy Coordination Committees (PCC) (assistant/deputy

⁶² Zegart, 54.

assistant secretary level) comprise the day-to-day forum for interagency coordination of national security policy⁶³—figure 6.

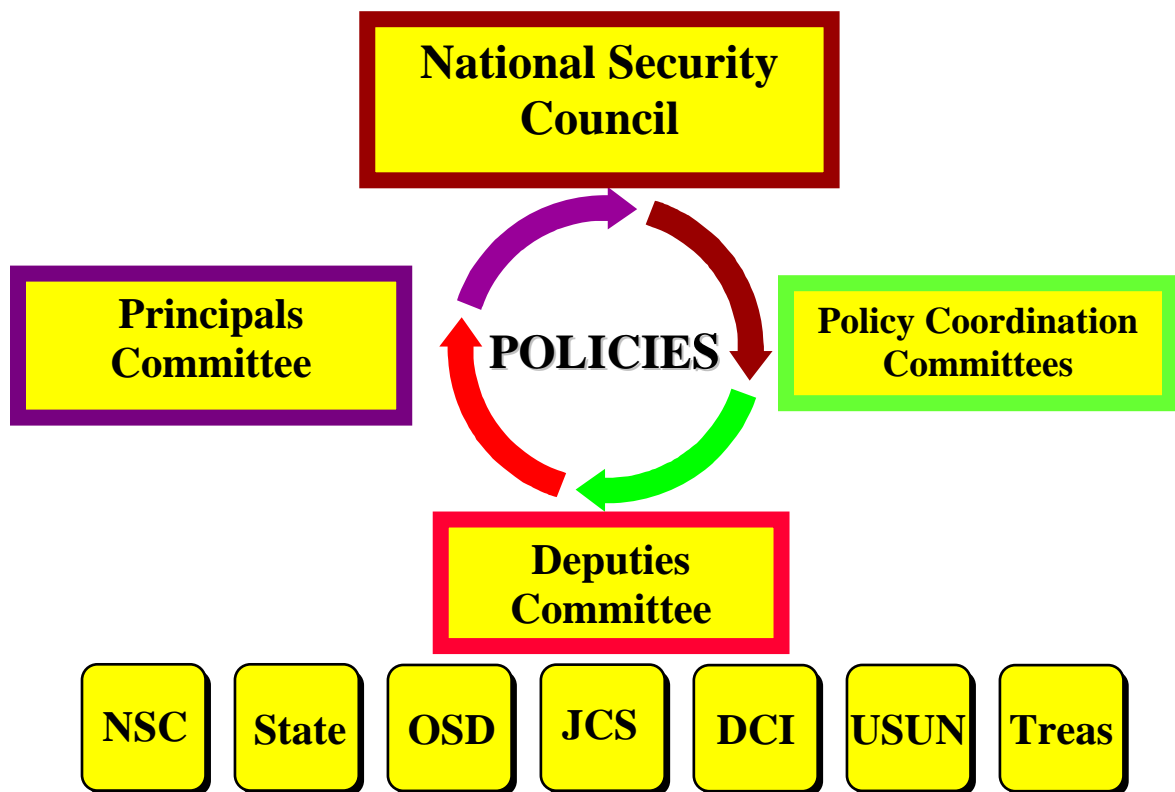


Figure 6: The Interagency Process at the NSC

Per Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub. 0-2, “Interagency coordination demands planners consider all instruments of national power and recognize which agencies are best postured to achieve the objective.”⁶⁴ The interagency process requires “extensive coordination within and among the agencies of the executive branch. The benefit of the process is that it is thorough and inclusive—each organization brings its own practices and skills to the interagency process. The drawback is that it can also be

⁶³ Alan G. Whittaker, Ph.D, Frederick C. Smith and Ambassador Elizabeth McKune, *The National Security Policy Process: The National Security Council and Interagency System* (Washington, DC: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, 2006), 10-12.

⁶⁴ Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Publication 0-2*, (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 10 July 2001), I-10.

slow and cumbersome—each agency also brings its own culture, philosophy and bureaucratic interests.”⁶⁵

Since its inception there have been critics who do not believe that the NSC system is capable of serving the President as well as it was designed to. A 50 year retrospective on the NSC stated that it was “composed of representatives of many agencies, its members were not free to adopt the broad, statesmanlike attitude desired by the President, but, rather, were ambassadors of their own departments, clinging to departmental rather than national views.”⁶⁶

Once Presidential policy is made, it is the obligation of the Principals and Deputies to ensure that their respective agencies and departments develop strategies and operations to support national policy. It is on this downward slope to ‘where the rubber meets the road’ that separate strategies and operations are, for the most part, created within interagency stovepipes. Bureaucratic protectionism, careerism, resources and work volume serve as strong forces that prevent interagency coordination and synchronization. Potential solutions and dexterity disappear, which in turn lowers effectiveness and efficiency. The lack of a binding legal requirement and organizational structure for ‘horizontal’ interagency coordination and synchronization at strategic and operational levels (and the implied shared planning and tasking) extends operational timelines and creates missed tactical opportunities. At the root of the problem is the realistic point that “national security agencies are not created by international relations realists who think in terms of organizational optimality. They are created by political

⁶⁵ National Defense University, *Interagency Management of Complex Crisis Operations Handbook*, (Washington DC: National Defense University, 2003), 6.

⁶⁶ National Security Council, “History of the National Security Council 1947-1997,” accessed at: <http://www.fas.org>, on: 12 November 2006.

actors who must operate in a reality suffused with conflict, contention, and compromise...”⁶⁷

To build upon the history and general construct of the U.S. national security apparatus, the next chapter will examine how the U.S. has organized itself and developed strategy to combat terrorism.

⁶⁷ Zegart, 53.

CHAPTER 4

U.S. ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGY FOR COMBATING TERRORISM

First, the supreme, most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and the commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking, neither mistaking it for, not trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its true nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.⁶⁸

Carl Von Clausewitz
On War

Since the events of 9/11, the U.S. has gone through a process of restructuring its organization for combating terrorism. It has equally gone through a process of restating its combating terrorism strategy. This chapter will review the U.S. organization and strategy for combating terrorism, and investigate how the U.S. is postured to fight an agile and elusive non-state organization such as AQ.

The U.S. Organization for Combating Terrorism

The structure through which the U.S. combats terrorism is a subset of its national security apparatus. As such, it is capable of bringing to bear all elements of national power. Current responsibilities for combating terrorism are spread out throughout the executive branch. In support of the President at the policy level, the NSC develops and reviews foreign policy for offensive counter terrorism (CT) and the Homeland Security Council (HSC) develops and reviews domestic policy for defensive anti-terrorism (AT). At the strategy and operations level the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) has the responsibility for national strategic and operational planning. The JCS creates the National Military Strategy for the War on Terrorism (WOT). U.S. Special Operations

⁶⁸ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 100.

Command (USSOCOM) is the lead DoD WOT planner, and is responsible for synchronizing the WOT plans of the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs). The Ambassador for Combating Terrorism at DoS, and the CT Center at the CIA, are responsible for their respective global CT strategies. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for homeland security strategy, and it relies on the DoD for a homeland defense strategy. At the tactical level, foreign CT actions are primarily conducted by DoD, CIA and DoS. Domestic AT tactical actions are primarily conducted by DHS, DoJ and state and local law enforcement agencies.

U.S. Representative Ike Skelton's comments to the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism in April 2006 were indicative of the frustration that a growing number of U.S. lawmakers, military officers and government CT professionals have toward the focus of WOT efforts:

Almost five years after 9/11, it's not clear to me that our government is doing it all it can to defeat [AQ] or capture Bin Laden. We need all instruments of national power working seamlessly together to achieve that goal...our Special Operations Command is the most capable it's ever been, and it's getting more so. This Congress has granted it extraordinary authority to build partnerships in the field that will help take down terrorist networks. But without empowered interagency process that's working in concert, our military cannot fully achieve its goal... Our current structure for national security was, as you know, set up by the National Security Act of 1947, when Harry Truman was president. It was no mean feat to pass that reform and establish the National Security Council and the Air Force after the Second World War, at the very start of the Cold War. In addition, you know I was able to work on the reform of the Defense Department that ended up being passed as the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. At the time, people said it didn't need to be done. Others said it was too hard to do. Still others said it would destroy the individual services and devastate the nation's defense and warfighting capabilities... But 20 years later, we've implemented almost all of it, and almost all of it has been successful... The Goldwater-Nichols Act included changes in personnel systems, assignment policies, promotion requirements, professional military education institutions, as well as organizations, and lines of command and control... Almost five years after 9/11, people are saying that interagency

differences in culture, problems with communication, difficulties with integrated planning and operations still haven't been resolved to the extent they must be...We want to know, here in Congress, how we can help... such as a new national security act or a Goldwater-Nichols type of reform is necessary to get this interagency integration right.⁶⁹

Seams in the U.S. Counter Terrorism Organization

The seams in the U.S. CT system are marked by the interagency stovepipes that prevent effective synchronization of the elements of national power. A summary of these seams was presented by Michael Vickers⁷⁰ in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities on March 15 2006:

In planning, the problems center on the NCTC and SOCOM, the two organizations charged with national and military global strategic planning and operations. The NCTC may be charged with national strategic and operational planning, but has limited authority and capability to do so. It is an Intelligence Community, primarily terrorist warning organization that has been charged with integrated strategic and operational planning for diplomacy, information influence operations, covert action and military operations. Responsibility for integrated national planning is thus divorced not only from execution, but, for all practical purposes, from detailed operational planning as well. A similar problem besets SOCOM. It has been charged with developing detailed global military plans, but it is isolated from non-DoD planners (the Joint Staff, for example, represents DoD on the NCTC). SOCOM's global planning authority is also circumscribed, for all practical purposes, within DoD by the power wielded by the GCCs.⁷¹

The lack of authorities and horizontal integration and cooperation within the interagency is hampering the efforts of NCTC and USSOCOM in their GWOT planning and synchronizing roles. That equates to lost opportunities at the operational and tactical

⁶⁹ Ike Skelton, U.S. Representative (D-MO), Comments during House Armed Services Committee hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism, April 4, 2006, *Congressional Quarterly, Inc., FDCH Political Transcripts*, accessed at: LexisNexis.com, on 15 September 2006.

⁷⁰ Michael Vickers is Director of Strategic Studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington, DC.

⁷¹ Michael Vickers, "Implementing GWOT Strategy: Overcoming Interagency Problems," Testimony before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities of the House Armed Services Committee, March 15 2006, accessed at: <http://www.csbaonline.org>, on: 28 October 2006.

levels—less effective, efficient and timely. Eventually the current overarching perception abroad of U.S. kinetic CT efforts (hard power) will need to give way to long term stabilizing efforts (soft power) in the Mid East, and the DoD will shift toward a supporting role as other interagency partners (with their inherent authorities and capabilities) take the lead. The requirement for interagency cooperation and synchronization will continue, and possibly increase, along with the shift to subtle soft power operations and efforts. General Zinni observed in his 2006 book titled “The Battle for Peace” that “resolving crisis requires integrating all the elements of power—diplomacy, information, military, economic, and even NGOs. Trying to solve everything with the biggest hammer—the military—is lob-sided.”⁷²

USSOCOM clearly articulates its WOT mission: “USSOCOM leads, plans, synchronizes, and as directed, executes global operations against terrorist networks.”⁷³ Leading the planning and synchronization of military CT actions has proven to be a difficult undertaking. The GCCs have grown accustomed to their role as the U.S. military strategic and operational leaders. As a planner, integrator and synchronizer within the U.S. military, USSOCOM’s challenge is the prioritization of limited and valuable assets amongst the GCCs. Each of the GCCs continues to have the responsibility to develop theater-specific military WOT plans. As a Functional Combatant Commander, USSOCOM is in a challenging and unique position as the lead Combatant Commander for the WOT. That difficult task has become increasingly more manageable. The level of complexity for USSOCOM increases significantly with U.S. interagency coordination, because USSOCOM has no authority in the interagency. The

⁷² Tony Zinni and Tony Koltz, *The Battle for Peace*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 125.

⁷³ U.S. Special Operations Command, USSOCOM GWOT Mission Statement, accessed at: <http://www.socom.mil>, on: 10 February 2007.

synchronization and coordination challenge rises yet again when trying to lead efforts amongst informal global CT networks.⁷⁴ As a global synchronizer, USSOCOM's challenge revolves around the multiplicity of operational level command within U.S. CT structure.

The lack of interagency coordination was highlighted in a September 2001 General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Committees: "Key interagency functions are resident in several different organizations, resulting in fragmented leadership and coordination. These circumstances hinder unity of effort and limit accountability. However, the current attention being focused on this issue provides an opportunity to improve leadership and coordination of programs to combat terrorism."⁷⁵ After 9/11, numerous discussions and reports identified the stovepiped U.S. CT structure, which culminated in the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Report. The call for a coordinating structure for CT within the interagency was made clear.

The President established the NCTC in August 2004. NCTC has the responsibility as "the primary organization in the [U.S.] Government for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and [CT] and to conduct strategic operational planning by integrating all instruments of national power." Congress codified the NCTC in December 2004 in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act and placed the NCTC under the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The NCTC website suggests that interagency CT coordination and unity of operational command have come to fruition: "Unique among US agencies, NCTC also serves as the

⁷⁴ An informal global CT network consists of nation-state, non-state, non-government organizations, media, and other trans-national companies and organizations working toward a common CT goal.

⁷⁵ U.S. General Accounting Office, *Combating Terrorism: Selected Challenges and Related Recommendations*, Report to Congressional Committees, (Washington D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, September 2001), accessed at: <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com>, on: 10 January 2001.

primary organization for strategic operational planning for counterterrorism. Operating under the policy direction of the President of the United States, the National Security Council, and the Homeland Security Council, NCTC provides a full-time interagency forum and process to plan, integrate, assign lead operational roles and responsibilities, and measure the effectiveness of strategic operational counterterrorism activities of the US Government, applying all instruments of national power to the counterterrorism mission.”⁷⁶

Despite the NCTC mission statement, and as put forth Representative Skelton, there is no evidence that U.S. CT is coordinated, integrated or synchronized. Vice Admiral Redd (USN Ret.), the Director of the NCTC stated his views on CT coordination and integration in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism in April 2006:

In my view, strategic operational planning fills a long-existing gap in government... Simply put, the White House has long been in the business of developing broad strategy and policy. At the other end of the spectrum, the Cabinet departments and agencies have been responsible for conducting operations in the field. What has been missing is the piece in-between; the piece between policy and operations. That need has become even more obvious as we prosecute the global war on terror. Strategic operational planning is designed to fill that gap... it is designed...to bring all elements of national power to bear on the war on terror. Our charter, in this regard, is simple in description, but extremely complex in execution. Basically, it involves three phases. First, there's a planning process. This involves taking our [CT] strategies and policies, and translating them first into strategic goals, then into objectives, and finally into discrete tasks. Those tasks are then to be prioritized and assigned to the departments and agencies, with lead and partner responsibilities defined. This process is not a unilateral drafting exercise by NCTC; it is rather an interagency effort involving literally hundreds of departmental planners working under our leadership. The second phase involves what the legislation describes as interagency coordination of operational activities, that's been alluded to here today. That involves the coordination, integration and synchronization of departmental operations. The final phase involves an assessment process. NCTC

⁷⁶ National Counterterrorism Center, NCTC Mission Statement, accessed at: <http://www.nctc.gov>, on: 28 December 2006.

is charged by the president with monitoring, evaluating and assessing the execution and effectiveness of the plan, and recommending changes where needed."⁷⁷

In his testimony, Admiral Redd identified a horizontal gap that long existed within the agencies and departments of the interagency. As a strategic-operational planning staff, the NCTC acts much like a Joint Task Force designated by and subordinate to a U.S. military GCC. Strategic-operational planning is an important and absolutely necessary function to conduct sustained operations, but it falls short of addressing coordination, synchronization and operational-level unity of command within the U.S. CT organization. The Admiral's comments above make it clear that stovepipe seams continue to plague the interagency despite the efforts of NCTC, specifically that "those tasks are then to be prioritized and assigned to the departments and agencies, with lead and partner responsibilities defined." Lead and partner responsibilities amongst agencies and departments implies a lack of directive authority, which is not so different from ineffective and outdated CT policies—such as National Security Decision Directive 207 (NSPD 207) of 1986 which will be discussed on the next page.

U.S. Strategy for Combating Terrorism

All strategy is about 'the future.' The future is where strategy has its effect. In dealing with unknowns and uncertainties, strategy forecasts from a knowledge and understanding of the systems of the strategic environment—what they are (facts and assumptions) and how they interact (observation, reason, and assumptions) within the dimensions of strategy.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ John Scott Redd, VADM, USN, Ret., Director, National Counterterrorism Center, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism, April 4, 2006, *Congressional Quarterly, Inc, FDCH Political Transcripts*, available at: LexisNexis.com, accessed on 15 September 2006.

⁷⁸ Harry Y. Yarger, "Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy," February 2006, 15.

The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) is an improvement in U.S. strategy—albeit one forced by a tragic strike against Americans. Before 9/11, the administrations of Presidents Carter, Reagan, Bush (41), and Clinton employed inconsistent strategies for combating terrorist organizations amidst rising threats.

Formerly, the responsibility for the coordination of U.S. responses to terrorist acts belonged to a designated “lead agency.” Per President Reagan’s NSPD 207, The National Program for Combating Terrorism, the lead agency for international terrorist incidents was the DoS, and the lead agency for domestic terrorist incidents was the DoJ with the FBI as lead for domestic operational response. The arrangement created an unintended bureaucratic competition within the executive branch. The result was a lack of unity of command, which led to a lack of a unified effort and focus on the CT mission.

NSPD 207 did, however, call for an approach that included all elements of national power: “The entire range of diplomatic, economic, legal, military, paramilitary, covert action, and informational assets at our disposal must be brought to bear against terrorism.”⁷⁹ NSPD 207 and subsequent, pre-911 CT directives and strategies did not grant the requisite, operational level power and coordinating authority needed to stage strong actions and responses. Consequently, decades of inaction emboldened groups such as AQ by allowing them the environment needed for growth.

Subsequent to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the 9/11 Commission proposed a strategy with three dimensions: “(1) attack terrorists and their organizations, (2) prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism, and (3) protect

⁷⁹ Ronald W. Reagan, “The National Program for Combating Terrorism,” National Security Decision Directive Number 207, January, 20, 1986, accessed at: <http://nsaarchive.chadwyck.com>, on: 19 February 2007.

against and prepare for terrorist attacks.”⁸⁰ The 9/11 report’s findings lead to executive branch and interagency reviews that continue today.

The 2006 NSCT, which updates the 2003 NSCT, calls for an interagency approach and specifies ends, ways and means. It brings to light an improved awareness of the enemy, and points out a concise way ahead for winning the WOT. It states that “the paradigm for combating terrorism now involves the application of all elements of our national power and influence.”⁸¹

The 2006 NSCT long term goal of “advancing effective democracy” in the Mid East has met with some controversy. Those who oppose that goal cite cultural differences between the Western and Islamic worlds, and suggest modifying that long term goal with something more vague and achievable such as advancing representative government. The 2006 NSCT identifies four short term goals to set the conditions and allow the time for its long-term goal to develop and grow: prevent attacks by terrorist networks, deny WMD to rogue states and terrorist allies who seek to use them, deny terrorists the support and sanctuary of rogue states, and deny terrorists control of any area they would use as a base and launching pad for terror. Here, the use of the verbs “prevent” and “deny” imply a delaying effect until the sovereign nations of the Mid East can “police their own.” U.S. logic is to assist in the creation of future Islamic representative governments, which supports long term U.S. interests of willing and able partners against state funded or non-state organizations using terrorist tactics. The strategic ends called for in the 2006 NSCT are consistent with the reasonable national

⁸⁰ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report Executive Summary* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 22 July 2004), 17.

⁸¹ George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2006), 1.

security expectations. The ways and means through which the U.S. is working to achieve those ends are lacking and are the primary focus of this paper.

Operational and Strategic Gaps in U.S. Counter Terrorism

The U.S. has employed all elements of national power in CT operations since 9/11. As previously discussed, coordination problems exist in the operational execution of the U.S. CT strategy, which are the results of bureaucratic seams created by the antiquated configuration of the current National Security Apparatus. Operational-level gaps in U.S. CT also exist and must be addressed to ensure success.

Terrorist Finance

Much has been done to deny terrorist finances since 9/11. For example, “on September 24, 2001 President Bush issued Executive Order 13224 on Terrorist Financing. The order authorizes seizure of assets that belong to terrorists or terrorist supporters as designated by the State Department's Office of Counterterrorism list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations.”⁸²

A number of Congressional Committees directly or indirectly address terrorist financing to include: the House Financial Services Committee, Government Reform Committee; the House Government Reform Committee Subcommittee on National Security, Veteran Affairs, and International Relations; the House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security; the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Financial Institutions; and the

⁸² Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on International Operations and Terrorism.

The Patriot Act Section 311 authorizes the Department of Treasury (DoT) to designate money laundering institutions and impose special measures that require U.S. financial institutions to keep records of transactions with suspect institutions.⁸³ DoT is the U.S. government key repository of financial information, and it created the Office of Financial Intelligence under the Director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network to “...lead to a greater emphasis and understanding of money laundering, terrorist financing and other forms of illicit finance...” and support the intelligence communities CT efforts.⁸⁴

In his doctoral dissertation, “Financing Terror: An Analysis and Simulation for Affecting Al Qaeda's Financial Infrastructure,” Steve Kiser deduced:

Terrorism has and will continue to evolve; the same is true of its financial support... The strategy of attacking such a group by targeting its assets is a recent development. As with any new strategy, it must be adjusted as new information is developed regarding both the target and the strategy's ability to impact the target... Opening a front on terrorist groups through their finances is an approach that must be more fully explored. As a policy initiative, a great deal is left to learn regarding exactly what counter-finance efforts accomplish, how to best exploit counter-finance effects, and how to better craft and implement future counter-finance initiatives.⁸⁵

Kiser's reasoning is an effective method for identifying a gap in the current U.S. approach toward denying terrorist finances. Though the Treasury Department's work within the international banking system is thorough and likely to improve with time, there

⁸³ U.S Senate and House of Representatives in Congress, “USA Patriot Act,” HR 3162, October 24, 2001, section 311, accessed at: <http://www.epic.org>, on 18 February 2007.

⁸⁴ William J. Fox, Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, U.S. Department of Treasury, Statement before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs on April 29, 2004, accessed at: <http://www.fincen.gov>, on: 18 February 2007.

⁸⁵ Steve Kiser, *Financing Terror: An Analysis and Simulation for Affecting Al Qaeda's Financial Infrastructure*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2005), accessed at: <http://www.rand.org>, on: 23 December 2006, 222.

is no effective method by which the U.S. can monitor or stop the flow terrorist funds through the informal and significant Hawala system. Furthermore, “given the billions of dollars that move through these channels every year and the Byzantine nature of the system, it provides a virtually invisible path for the funds.”⁸⁶ Being a non-western system that lacks requisite record keeping for data collection and analysis, developing alternate ways and means will be required to deny the terrorist organizations use of that effective and simple fund transfer system.

Strategic Communications

In September 2004, the Report of the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on Strategic Communication was published. Amongst its recommendations was that the President and Congress work together to fund an independent, non-profit and non-partisan center for strategic communications to support the NSC’s strategic communication committee. They further recommended that the center should be guided by three main purposes:

1. Provide information and analysis... on issues vital to U.S. national security including global public opinion; the role of culture, values, and religion in shaping human behavior; media trends and influences on audiences, information technologies...
2. Develop... plans, themes, products and programs for the creation and implementation of U.S. communications strategies that embrace diplomatic opportunities...
3. Support government strategic communications... that mobilize non-governmental initiatives; foster cross-cultural exchanges of ideas, people, and information; maintain knowledge management systems, language and skills inventories...augment planning, recruitment, and training...

⁸⁶ Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2004), 199.

⁸⁷ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, “Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication,” September 2004, 7-8.

Assembling a board comprised of a cross section of American intellectuals to focus on strategic communications would be useful. The DSB's suggestion that the strategic communication committee at the NSC committee would benefit from such a board implies that that NSC committee is not capable articulating a clear cut strategic message that the President and each executive branch department and agency can carry out.

The current executive branch lead on strategic communications is Karen Hughes, the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. She has been tasked by the President with leading the interagency efforts to advance the U.S. message and democratic values worldwide in contradiction with the ideologies of terrorist extremist organizations.⁸⁸ Hers is no small task, but it is clear cut. To date, her office has not produced a clear message or strategy that can be executed by the departments and agencies of the executive branch. That lack of a clear and effective strategic communications plan is a gap created by the stovepipe seams of the U.S. national security apparatus. The other executive departments and agencies are not compelled by law or supported by the current bureaucratic hierarchy to execute any plan produced by Under Secretary Hughes and the DoS Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs staff. That must be a source of frustration and misunderstanding for Under Secretary Hughes and her staff.

Today the conditions for the release of numerous mixed messages are created by the lack of both a clear and defined strategic communications policy and a horizontal interagency structure through which the strategic communications lead could effectively guide the execution of that policy. That equates to the opposite of strategic communications. The structure of the executive branch and methods through which it

⁸⁸ Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Biography, accessed at: <http://www.state.gov>, on 16 December 2006.

executes policy makes Under Secretary Hughes' task of an integrated message nearly impossible, because she lacks the authority and an effective operational staffing conduit across the entire interagency. Without a clear and positive strategic communication message, the U.S. has unwittingly created a negative perception in the international community.

The 2007 DoS Foreign Affairs manual on Organizations and Functions describes the Office of Strategic Communications and Planning as a "creative resource for the Bureau of Public Affairs" charged with the task of developing "strategies to advance the Administration's top issues, shape effective messages explaining U.S. policies and enhance communication(s)." To describe the office's interagency challenge and role strategic planning it states:

The office coordinates with bureaus throughout the Department, the White House, and other government agencies. PA/SCP's role involves both short and long range strategic planning to:

- (1) Develop communication strategies to support the Secretary's effort to bring foreign policy issues to foreign and domestic audiences
- (2) Advance the Administration's priority policies and shape effective messages related to those policies
- (3) Help ensure that public diplomacy/public affairs are part of all policy.⁸⁹

Those broad tasks describe actions that must take place to improve the state of U.S. foreign affairs by improving the messages passed to foreign audiences. One of the greatest challenges in executing those actions will be avoiding the inevitable contradictions that will continue to be created by the lack of interagency coordination. The most serious result of no central strategic communications plan will be a continuance of the U.S.'s poor perception management in the Mid East at a time when the nation can ill-afford that.

⁸⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Affairs Manual Volume 1—Organization and Functions," 23 February 2007, accessed at: <http://foia.state.gov>, on: 5 March 2007, 5.

Joint Interagency Coordination Groups

The requisite speed and coordination of all elements of national power that prosecuting the WOT has brought to the forefront of operational execution has caused the GCCs and their staffs to further integrate the specialized activities and capabilities of the interagency into their plans. To improve interagency coordination, facilitation, and synchronization and gain a broader interagency perspective, the GCCs have created Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG). The development of the JIACG within joint staffs “is evolutionary and takes into account the lessons identified from ongoing operations such as the [WOT], the war on drugs, the stability operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as joint and combined exercises and experiments.”⁹⁰

Most JIACG are assembled for specific mission areas or tasks, such as the GWOT. These “temporary” organizations are essentially Joint Task Forces with an interagency construct. Their strength is the broader capabilities that an interagency construct brings to bear. One weakness is that they lack the authorities to execute interagency operations. In addition, as constructs of executive order or mutual interagency agreements, they are not legally bound together. A new administration, or new agency leadership, can decide to cease operations regardless of the strategic necessity. In his April 2005 Joint Forces Quarterly article on Joint Interagency Cooperation, Matthew Bogdanos identified three major challenges that JIACGs face:

The foremost is the lack of a single, national-level organization issuing guidance, managing competing agency policies, and directing agency participation in JIACGs. In short, NSC expects unity of effort without unity of command...The goal must be truly horizontal interagency planning performed virtually simultaneously at the tactical (task force), operational (combatant command), and

⁹⁰ U.S. Joint Forces Command, “Doctrinal Implications of the Joint Interagency Coordination Group,” The Joint Warfighting Center Joint Doctrine Series Pamphlet 6, 27 June 2004, 3.

strategic (Joint Staff) levels, tied together by each agency's clear policy directives derived from the National Security Strategy...

A second challenge is the lack of government-wide standards for information sharing among agencies, exacerbated by the lack of a communications architecture linking those agencies... But true horizontal interagency coordination requires equally true horizontal interagency information exchange at all levels... Sufficient staffing is the final pressing issue. Although Secretary Rumsfeld authorized JIACGs, DOD created no additional positions. Each commander, therefore, had to staff JIACG by reassigning personnel from within an already understaffed command... JIACG's members are still primarily Reservists, but that pool is almost dry, and the joint manning document still does not include JIACG positions. Non-DOD agencies face a similar problem. With few exceptions, overseas deployments of civilians must be voluntary, and many agencies have already run out of volunteers.⁹¹

As pointed out by Bogdanos, unity of command, interagency information sharing and proper staffing would represent marked improvements for JIACGs. Beyond the most significant issue he addressed, unity of command, is that JIACGs lack the authorities to execute coordinated and synchronized interagency operations at the theater operational level. The lack of coordinated and synchronized operational level execution authority greatly reduces the agility and speed by which the U.S. can project the best combinations of its elements of national power.

Reviewing the U.S. national security apparatus and its organization for combating terrorism illustrates an antiquated construct that dates back to the years immediately following World War II. Before change can happen, an understanding that there exists a need for change must arise. The next chapter will briefly review the dynamics of organizational change.

⁹¹ Matthew Bogdanos, "Joint Interagency Cooperation: The First Step," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, issue 37, April 2005, 10-18.

CHAPTER 5

CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL PARADIGMS

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.

Niccolo Machiavelli
The Prince

Nearly all great ideas eventually become obsolete, and so do organizations that do not adjust to current the challenges they face. But how does necessary change come about? Most mature organizations are certain to resist change. In some cases it is because it is hard to teach old dogs new tricks or that is the way it has always been. In other cases it is simply to preserve their structural integrity—read job security.

Identifying Organizational Shortfalls

Today the U.S. interagency is operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment, and “change is especially necessary in organizations that wish to prosper in a [VUCA] environment.”⁹² How will the various departments and agencies involved connect the need for change to success in that environment?

One of the prime motivations for change is the realization that goals or objectives are not being met. The events of 9/11 and the subsequent WOT have provided plenty of examples of interagency shortfalls, but it appears that the data is not yet serious enough to cause change. Perhaps that is because “the dynamics of organizational politics... [provides] a ‘win-lose’ flavor to information-giving... Each actor acquires information on its own policy issues and not those of others, thereby denying full, balanced information flow to the decision maker; its own parochial interests and goals shape each actor's

⁹² National Defense University, “Strategic Leadership and Decision Making: Vision and the Management of Change,” available at: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu>, accessed 10 February 2007.

participation in identification and evaluation of policy options...”⁹³ Until the data is conclusive and damaging enough to cause U.S. lawmakers to enact change, it is likely that the interagency will remain set in current patterns. After all, the U.S. military and DoD resisted the Goldwater-Nichols act all the way. Interagency resistance to change should be expected, “because culture is so deeply rooted in [its] history and collective experience, working to change it requires a major investment of time and resources. Help from a change agent outside the system is often advisable. Without such help, it is difficult for insiders to view their ‘reality’ as something they’ve constructed, and to see meaning in things they normally take for granted.”⁹⁴

Identifying Solutions and Institutionalizing Change

In finding solutions, success lies in looking beyond the organizational culture and current expectations toward the new expectations and requirements. Tough questions must be asked and answered in a dispassionate manner. Why is change needed? What are the new goals? Who will be accountable for what specific actions? Who will monitor the new organization to make sure it will continue to be viable? How will this organization interact with other organizations? Reviewing current organizational shortcomings and future organizational expectations provides the basis for vital change.

Once change has been made, it takes time to become established. It has been twenty years since Goldwater-Nichols, and the DoD still continues to become more joint. An indicator that change has taken root is “when it becomes part of the organizational culture—it becomes part of ‘the way we do things around here.’ There are two techniques

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Symphony Orchestra Institute, “Organization Change,” accessed at: <http://www.soi.org>, on: 10 February 2007.

for institutionalizing change. First, show people how the change has helped improve performance and competitive advantage. Second, the strategic leader makes sure that the next generation of top leaders personify the vision.”⁹⁵ The Goldwater-Nichols Act is an example of how change was institutionalized within the U.S. military. As a result, the current generation of military professionals thinks and works more “jointly” than did their mentors not so long ago.

Chapter 1 through Chapter 4 reviewed the strategy, organization and prospective future of the AQ network and Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations, and the U.S. national security apparatus and organization and strategy through which it combats terrorism. This chapter briefly reviewed the dynamics of organizational change. The next chapter will propose potential solutions to the gaps and seams in the U.S. organization and strategy for combating terrorism.

⁹⁵ National Defense University.

CHAPTER 6

AN ACHIEVABLE FUTURE FOR U.S. COUNTER TERRORISM

The Turk was stupid and would believe that rebellion was absolute, like war, and deal with it on the analogy of absolute warfare. Analogy is fudge, anyhow, and to make war upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife.

T.E. Lawrence
The Evolution of a Revolt

Who in the U.S. foresaw the Russian ideological clash moving beyond its borders or predicted the onset of the Cold War while Lenin and Trotsky were vying for power? No one did, yet the second half of the twentieth century was defined by the ideological power struggle that pitted western democracies and U.S. power against communism and Soviet power. During the last three decades of the 45 year Cold War, the struggle was not daily headline news in the U.S. By then, the U.S. had taken on an even pace and steady strain toward the Cold War. It remained in the minds of the American population, it was the center focus of the U.S. national security apparatus, and all elements of U.S. national power were employed to win it—it was a long war.

The Duration of Ideological Struggles

Today, who knows how far the ideology of the Salafi extremists will spread? With 1.3 billion Muslims in the world, this is a serious matter. Viewing this ideological struggle from the eyes of the Salafi-Jihadist, this is a continuation of a long term struggle between Islam and Christendom/Judaism. For now, Salafi extremists represent a very small minority of the Islamic world. To succeed they understand that they must increase their numbers. To end the violence, the U.S. understands that it must play a role in setting the conditions that will eventually reduce their numbers and power. That makes

the ideological conscience of the greater Islamic world the ultimate goal for both sides. In other words, “we are in a struggle about values; that will ultimately be decided by winning hearts and minds.”⁹⁶ Ideological struggles are fought over generations and this one will be no different. The U.S. government and people need to understand that “this is a much bigger campaign than the war on terrorism has so far embraced. It will require tools—economic, cultural, and political—that the US has defined but has yet to wield effectively.”⁹⁷ Convincing Islamic populations that representative governments, coexistence with peoples of other religious beliefs, and policing terrorists as criminals are in their best interests will take a lot of time. Taking on a steady strain Cold War pace will be required in the WOT. Part of what it is going to take to for the U.S. to win is a good deal of time, patience and fortitude.

Contrasting Ideologies

Ideology is “a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture.”⁹⁸ The conflict between Islamic terrorist organizations and the U.S. and Western nations ultimately breaks down to an ideological struggle. In his analytical writings on the inevitable turmoil that occurs between the major modern civilizations, Sam Huntington asserts that there is an ongoing clash between Islam and the West. He characterizes the relationship of these two major civilizations as amongst the “more conflictual”⁹⁹ and further points out that “Muslim bellicosity and violence are late

⁹⁶ Right Honorable Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, “Human Rights and Terrorism,” Speech at Whitehall, London, 14 February 2007. Available at: <http://www.rusi.org>, accessed on: 17 February 2007.

⁹⁷ Daniel L. Byman, “The War on Terror Requires Subtler Weapons,” *Financial Times*, May 27, 2003.

⁹⁸ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. “ideology.”

⁹⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Shuster, Inc, 1996), 245.

twentieth-century facts which neither Muslim states nor non-Muslim states can deny.”¹⁰⁰

It is no far leap to assert that religious based Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations identify themselves as the vanguards of their civilization’s ideology in the clash with the west. Being that the U.S. has declared a WOT and its primary target is AQ and Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations, it is also fair to consider the U.S. the vanguard of Western civilization’s ideology.

The last significant ideological struggle that the U.S. engaged in was the Cold War. It was fought around the globe and over a long period of time. The U.S. employed all elements of national power in order to eventually come out on top. Regularly modernizing U.S. military forces—a by-product of a strong U.S. economy—and the powerful U.S. economy itself whittled away at the Soviet Union, but neither element was the decisive factor. Had the will of the people within the Soviet Union and Eastern Block communist nations not faltered, it is likely that the Cold War would still be going on today. So what caused the will of those communist peoples to falter as it did? Their initial outlook certainly must have been to defend themselves and their way of life. Yet eventually they understood their governments for what they were and the benefits that representative government could bring to their conditions. That popular realization took decades to come about, and it eventually became the catalyst for change. Their beliefs in the need for change were undoubtedly based on their perceptions of the freedoms afforded to people living in Western nations. Ultimately, the West’s management of how it was perceived won the Cold War.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 258.

Strategic Communications and Perception Management

Today in the information age it has become easier to communicate to the masses via the media and the internet, both of which have become powerful tools for shaping perceptions. Computers, data storage and the increase in available information access are new and effective tools in the subtle art of perception management. Distorting the purpose of messages, connecting perceived contradictory statements for all to judge, escalating statements beyond their original focus or intent are all tools of the spin masters throughout time, but the fierceness, speed and volume by which these weapons of propaganda can be propagated in this era is truly unprecedented.

Regardless of the inevitable continuation of blood letting, the ideological struggle between Islam and the West will see its ultimate contest fought in the minds and wills of the masses of both civilizations. As such, a consistent and thoughtful strategic communication plan will be the most effective tool the U.S. can employ to win in the ultimate battleground.

Though a small percentage of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims, three important thoughts must be kept in mind about modern jihadists. First, that .01% would equate to 130 thousand globally dispersed combatants. Second, while combating this elusive and insidious threat the U.S. and its WOT allies must remain careful not to unintentionally give cause to further enemy recruiting efforts. Third, the U.S. and allies must also be mindful to not inadvertently bolster unification of jihadist groups.

The heart of the strategic communication challenge for the U.S. is replacing the broad perception of western hegemony in the Islamic world with a positive message of

peaceful coexistence. In his thorough comparison of 'hard power' -vs- 'soft power,'

Joseph Nye concluded that:

Terrorism is a method of violent conflict that is sometimes called the weapon of the weak against the strong. Some would argue that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. Therefore treating suppression of terrorism as a global public good is merely the hypocrisy of the powerful trying to disarm the weak. But that need not be the case. Not all struggles for... liberation have turned to deliberate killing of the innocent. Deliberate killing of non-combatants (in war or not) is condemned by the moral code of most major religions, including Islam. Such behavior is unacceptable whether it is carried out by the powerful or the weak. While there are problems with any definition at the margins, the core of terrorism is clear enough to permit efforts to de-legitimize it.¹⁰¹

Nye's insightful analysis offers a timeless base message for U.S. strategic communications. De-legitimizing the message of AQ and Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations by publicly exposing and speaking out against their brutal and murderous tactics of intimidation will serve as the most effectively long term tool in U.S. strategic communications. To ultimately win the WOT, "the [US] and [its] allies will have to not just kill and capture key terrorist operatives, but also identify ways to discredit the radical ideology that supports these groups."¹⁰²

Preemptive actions against terrorist organizations that have already and will continue to try to strike the U.S. and its interests will be necessary. Still, overt and grand scale U.S. activities in the Mid East will not achieve much headway toward the ultimate goal of convincing the greater Islamic world that representative governments offer a better way of life. The Salafi-Jihadist movement will use any and all propaganda it can to support its claims, and a large U.S. and/or western footprint in the Muslim world plays directly into their argument. In fact, "the Iraq conflict has become the 'cause celebre' for

¹⁰¹ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 209.

¹⁰² U.S. House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 6.

jihadists, breeding a deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement. Should jihadists leaving Iraq perceive themselves, and be perceived, to have failed, we judge fewer fighters will be inspired to carry on the fight.”¹⁰³ Hence, winning in Iraq will have a long term perception management and strategic communications consequences—for both sides.

Even when considering perception management, the U.S. should not abandon its pre-emptive CT policy towards AQ and jihadist organizations. For them the kinetic solution is, and will remain, logical. However, more subtle and short-term preemptive U.S. CT actions in the future will better serve the more essential and long-term strategic communications plan.

OSS Revived

Among the most difficult problems that the U.S. will encounter in the WOT will be those that require increased access and influence within the human fabric of Muslim society to solve. Two areas of concern covered in this paper that would benefit from greater societal access and influence are Salafi and Wahhabi madrassas and the hawala monetary transfer system. Reversing the Jihadist ideological dogma and blocking the transfer of funds are critical CT functions. Neither will be effectively countered without internal influence and/or human intelligence. Once such activities are started, numerous other areas of interest will arise along with the potential for achieving positive effects. The conduct of such activities will require a great deal of operational patience and sweeping changes in law. In order to gain the timely knowledge of terrorist locations, activities and plans needed to conduct effective CT actions, the U.S. must be willing to

¹⁰³ Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

deal with foreign born scouts working on its behalf. In his testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities on June 29, 2006, Max Boot surmised:

Cultural knowledge cannot be so easily taught or transferred. In tribal societies, influence is entirely personal; the relationships cultivated by one soldier, spy, or diplomat cannot easily be passed along to a successor... Above all, it will require working with indigenous allies who must necessarily carry the bulk of the burden in this type of conflict. Native recruits have been key to America's most successful counterinsurgencies... Reliance on these native helpers is necessary because few if any outsiders can be expected to match guerrillas' knowledge of local topography and society... One of the key advantages of OSS II is that it would be able to employ indigenous personnel on a much larger scale than is practicable today. There is currently a legal prohibition on recruiting into the U.S. armed forces anyone who is not an American citizen or permanent resident (Green Card holder). The CIA also looks askance upon non-American officers (as opposed to agents). These are considered "security risks." But the greater risk is that we will lose the war on terror because we don't have enough understanding of the societies in which terrorists operate. Such knowledge can be acquired in one of two ways: either by long-term immersion in foreign societies or by simply recruiting from the societies in which we fight... the creation of a new OSS is a radical notion that could not be implemented tomorrow. It would require the most sweeping legislation since the 1987 Nunn-Cohen Amendment that created SOCOM... if we are to be successful in the Long War, we need to think outside of the traditional bureaucratic boxes, because the U.S. government as currently set up... simply is not adequately configured for the tasks ahead.¹⁰⁴

The potential utility of imbedded human information sources within the social landscape surrounding madrassas, hawalas and other Islamic terrorist organization enablers is comparable to past operations conducted by the FBI against the Mafia in the greater New York city area. There would be occasional compromises, systematic questions of integrity and doubts, but the long term strategic insights and ability to shape the battle-space would far outweigh those doubts.

¹⁰⁴ Max Boot, Senior Fellow in National Security Studies on the Council on Foreign Relations, Statement before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities on June 29, 2006.

A Whole of Government Approach to National Defense

Any parallels between the Cold War and WOT end at the tactical and operational application of the elements of national power. Decentralized, cellular terrorist organizations effectively employ information age communications and global transportation to avoid detection, communicate with one another, spread their message, recruit new members, position operational cells and move equipment and weapons. Defeating an elusive and constantly moving enemy will require the synchronous projection of all elements of national power. The fleeting nature of the modern terrorist is afforded to him by the enormous systems of land, sea and air transportation. Today's target is tomorrow's specter, be that an individual, a shipment of weapons, or a transfer of money. Agility and speed brought across the interagency is essential in order to increase tactical and operational successes. Hence, "countering the spread of the jihadist movement will require coordinated multilateral efforts that go well beyond operations to capture or kill terrorist leaders."¹⁰⁵

The British example of interagency cooperation is one from which the U.S. could learn. The decades of experience they gathered fighting terrorism in Northern Ireland "created an impressive capacity for inter-agency and inter-departmental collaboration. Following 9/11 this was further strengthened by the establishment of the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, which provides threat assessments for all departments and agencies concerned with preventing and combating terrorism and the protection of national critical infrastructure."¹⁰⁶ Recently updated British doctrine states "As is currently conducted by

¹⁰⁵ Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

¹⁰⁶ Frank Gregory and Paul Wilkinson, "Riding Pillion for Tackling Terrorism is a High-risk Policy," Chatham House, ISP/NSC Briefing Paper 05/01, July 2005, available at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk>, accessed on: 10 February 2007.

the Cabinet Office at the strategic level, coordination would be required to satisfy the range of competing priorities, sequence actions and compensate for structural and institutional imperfections. The overriding consideration should be to focus all activity and effort on the achievement of the National Strategic Aim in accordance with the Unifying Theme.”¹⁰⁷

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, is a proponent of improving the interagency process. His public statements indicate that he believes winning the WOT will take all elements of national power working in a synchronized manner, and that it cannot be won by the military alone. He recently spoke before the senate about his thoughts on the interagency:

Pace...told the senators that the U.S. government needs to look at “the expeditionary capabilities of other parts of our government,” besides those of the U.S. military. Pace held up the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 as an example of legislation that has had a lasting positive impact on making the government work better. “We should take a good hard look at our interagency effectiveness and take a look at, for example, the empowerment that the Goldwater-Nichols Act gave us in jointness in the military.”¹⁰⁸

The most effective solutions toward handling networked non-state actors such as AQ, is largely agreed to exist within the realm of interagency cooperation, yet the interagency is manned by professionals who rise by achieving operational successes within and for their own organizations.

Effective horizontal coordination is currently the domain of the NSC and is conducted by departmental leaders whose focus and service involves predominantly vertical action up to the president. In his comments before the House Armed Services

¹⁰⁷ U.K. Ministry of Defence, Joint Doctrine & Concepts Centre, *Joint Discussion Note 4/05, The Comprehensive Approach* (Shrivenham: Ministry of Defence, January 2006), 1-8.

¹⁰⁸ Jim Garamone, “Pace Calls on Congress to Help Government Agencies Work Together,” *DefenseLink*, accessed at: <http://www.defenselink.mil>, on 20 February 2007.

Committee hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism on April 4, 2006, U.S. Representative Curt Weldon stated:

As we fight the global war on terror, we face a determined, adaptive and ruthless enemy. Since this war began, President Bush and other senior leaders have repeatedly said that to preserve our freedom in the face of such an enemy, we must use all the instruments of our national power... DOD's recent Quadrennial Defense Review notes a deficiency in a section devoted to achieving unity of effort. To illustrate this challenge it cites the relationship in the field, between DOD's combatant commanders and the State Department's chiefs of mission, concluding that people from the two agencies must expand considerable effort on a case-by-case basis to act together in support of operations. The result...is that commanders and chiefs of mission lose agility in the face of an adaptive adversary, fleeing targets are missed... If the way we are currently arranged is not flexible or responsive or comprehensive enough to meet this war's front-line demands -- and that appears to be so -- we must critically examine our interagency relationships. Then we must make the necessary strategic and institutional changes to eliminate the stovepipes that restrict resources, information and expertise.¹⁰⁹

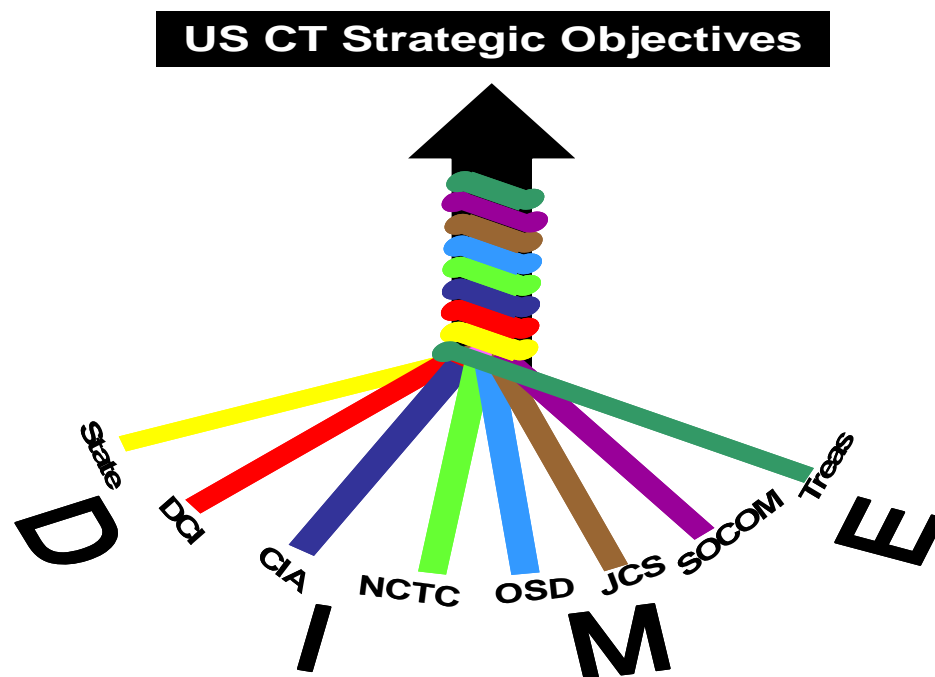


Figure 7: A Whole of Government Approach to US CT

¹⁰⁹ Curt Weldon, U.S. Representative (R-PA), Comments during House Armed Services Committee hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism, April 4, 2006, *Congressional Quarterly, Inc, FDCH Political Transcripts*, accessed at: LexisNexis.com, on 15 September 2006.

Figure 7 illustrates an interagency approach designed to capitalize on all elements of national power, because the “need for interagency operations goes far beyond mere coordination or cooperation. It demands that the [U.S.] plans, conducts and structures operations from the very outset as part of an intimately connected whole-of-government approach.”¹¹⁰ In fact, there is an ongoing study called the “Project on National Security Reform (PNSR)” being conducted by a distinguished coalition of current and former U.S. business leaders, lawmakers, and members of academia who intend to produce a National Security Act of 2008 study and draft legislation for congress by early 2008.¹¹¹

One of the many problems they, or anyone addressing this issue, will have to address is that “for many federal agencies, the first single point of authority is the President. Congress or the President should find a way to cause the various agencies of

¹¹⁰ Henry Crumpton, Ambassador, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism, April 4, 2006, *Congressional Quarterly, Inc, FDCH Political Transcripts*, accessed at: LexisNexis.com, on: 15 September 2006.

¹¹¹ Institute for Defense Analyses, “Project on National Security Reform (PNSR), Vision Statement,” accessed by e-mail from Robert Polk, Institute for Defense Analyses to author on 16 March, 2007.
- Excerpt of PNSR Vision: The Project on National Security Reform will prepare legislation to replace provisions of the National Security Act of 1947. The Project will also draft accompanying presidential directives to implement changes that do not need prescription in law. It will work with the Senate and House of Representatives to draft new rules to improve the structure and practices of the congressional committee system, which currently provide disjointed oversight of the interagency community. This two-year non-partisan effort, which is a project of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, seeks passage of a new law, the National Security Act of 2008, prior to the next presidential inauguration.

- PNSR Guiding Coalition: David M. Abshire (President and CEO, The Center for the Study of the Presidency), Norman R. Augustine (Retired Chairman and CEO, Lockheed Martin Corporation), Dennis C. Blair (Former President, Institute for Defense Analyses), Charles G. Boyd (President and CEO, Business Executives for National Security), Daniel W. Christman (Senior Vice President for International Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce), Newt Gingrich (Former Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives), James R. Locher III (Executive Director, Project on National Security Reform), Jessica Tuchman Mathews (President, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), John McLaughlin (Senior Fellow, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University), Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (Professor of International Relations, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University), Carlos Pascual (Vice President and Director, Foreign Policy Studies, The Brookings Institution), Thomas R. Pickering (Former U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations), Brent Scowcroft (President and Founder, The Scowcroft Group), Jeffrey H. Smith (Partner, Arnold & Porter), James B. Steinberg (Dean, Lyndon Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin), and Kenneth R. Weinstein (CEO, Hudson Institute).

the executive branch to pull together at the operational level during war.”¹¹² It is at this critical downward slope from the NSC (and HSC) that the stovepipes are created by the current national security apparatus structure. A strategic level interagency staff must be assembled, since JIACGs do not have the authorities to direct broad spectrum, synchronized interagency actions and solutions. The staff would have to have the authorities, capabilities and responsibilities to plan and implement complete and broad spectrum interagency solutions in an agile and fast-paced manner. In other word, be able to execute any combination of all elements of national power in concert, on-time and with a common purpose. Something to the effect of an empowered centralized, sub-NSC staff capable of physical or virtual communications and whole of government planning with the purpose of creating and/or authorizing coordinated and timely interagency actions and/or responses. In this case, hypothetically, the NSC drafts and proposes actions/responses to the President, who approves/disapproves, and then this hypothetical interagency staff makes those approved actions/responses operational and directs synchronized and timely whole of government tasks for decentralized execution worldwide. Because most operational level issues are handled at the regional level, greater authority to execute broad-spectrum actions at the Geographic Combatant Commands would likely be required as well.

The challenges of organizing, manning, training and equipping to meet the requirements of an updated information age infrastructure would be immense. Resources would be another challenge. Other than DoD, the interagency clearly does not have the budgets or manning to take on such bold new tasks—which is part of the U.S. problems in the first place. If all you have is a hammer, each challenge begins to look like a nail.

¹¹² Christopher Schnaubelt, “After the Fight: Interagency Operations,” *Parameters*, Winter 2005-2006, 59.

So how can U.S. lawmakers “bring that joint culture to the interagency, without diluting it inside DOD?”¹¹³ Doing so will take careful and logical planning with the goal of building a viable 21st century national security apparatus designed to bring about meaningful results.

Avoiding interagency stovepipes and broadening interagency understanding and utility, will require professional incentives and education similar to the Joint Staff Officer qualification in the U.S. armed forces. Based on the U.S. militaries’ experiences, the current studies on a National Security Officer designation and a National Security University (similar to the National Defense University) should indicate that these types of programs will greatly benefit the interagency. More importantly, they will create essential professional incentives designed to benefit a more whole of government approach. More than 20 years after Goldwater-Nichols, “the Defense Department has done a pretty good job of becoming joint. But joint alone is not good enough against the most likely threats of the present era. Technological improvements in combat capability, especially in information management, will be useful, but mostly will involve tinkering around the edges. We require a quantum leap to interagency operations.”¹¹⁴

An updated National Security Act will significantly improve the 60 year old U.S. national security apparatus. As a subset of the national security apparatus, the realm of CT would be amongst the greatest beneficiaries. Centralizing strategy and high-operational direction will result in a reduction of wasted and conflicting interagency efforts. The speed, agility, fusion and synchronization that information age technology

¹¹³ Edmund Giambastiani, ADM, USN, Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee during a hearing on Interagency Coordination in Combating Terrorism, April 4, 2006, Congressional Quarterly, Inc, FDCH Political Transcripts, available at: LexisNexis.com, accessed on 15 September 2006.

¹¹⁴ Schnaubelt, “After the Fight: Interagency Operations, 59.

offers combined with the capability to combine tailored actions/responses drawn from all elements of national power make it possible to complete the counter-terrorism tasks called for in the NSCT. Winning the long war will require coordinating and synchronizing short term and long term actions and responses at the tactical, operational and strategic levels in order to effectively carry out appropriate and targeted solutions—figure 8.

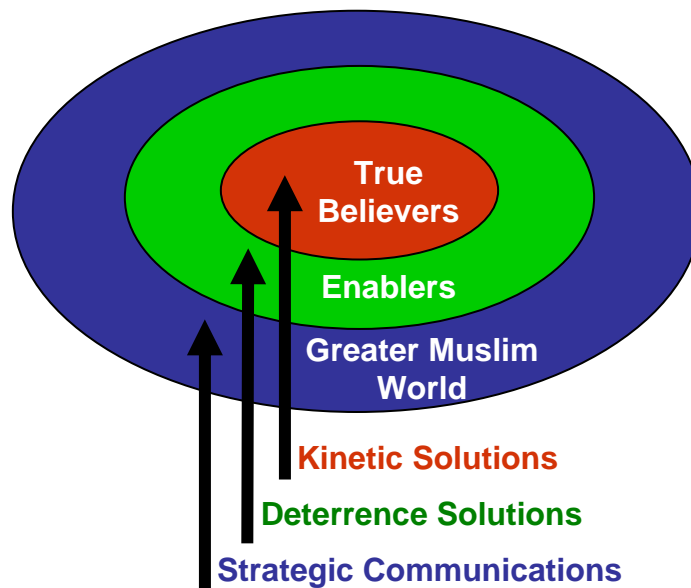


Figure 8: Appropriate and Targeted Solutions ¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Drawing by author.

CONCLUSION

Five years after 9/11, a comparison of AQ's strategy and organization to the U.S. strategy and organization for combating terrorism indicates that the U.S. has become more capable of defending itself against a determined networked non-state enemy. The comparison also reveals significant gaps and seams within the U.S. national security apparatus. Those gaps and seams create the operational space in which AQ can and will continue to function. Reducing those gaps and seams will enable the U.S. to more effectively take on AQ with the necessary agility, speed, subtlety and synchronization.

AQ and affiliates are a movement and/or network that operates in at least 60 countries. It is the most dangerous non-state terrorist organization in existence. From AQ central, Osama bin Laden and his top advisors skillfully lead and manage their extremist ideology and goals of destroying Israel, expelling U.S. and other western interests from the Mid East, and replacing Mid East secular governments with Islamic governments. They masterfully exploit the internet to recruit, train, finance, and provide logistics to their entire network.

AQ's core group is fewer than 1,000 members—the true believers. AQ affiliates are a disparate network of Islamic fundamentalist organizations that are loosely associated. In addition, there exist loose assortments of radicalized Muslims who willingly conduct ad hoc attacks on behalf of, and with assistance from, AQ. As a non-state actor, AQ does not have the burden of protecting borders, controlling an economy and trade, fielding regular military forces and the plethora of governmental functions that nation-states conduct. Its lack of fixed geographic basing combined with its horizontal and decentralized organization provides a distinct advantage for the conduct of

clandestine communications and operations. AQ has been successfully infiltrating legitimate charitable organizations and soliciting money via the internet. Additionally, it has continued to move vast amounts of money via the informal hawala system.

Ultimately, AQ's strategic goal is a renaissance of the caliphate guided under strict Salafi Islam. Corruption, injustice, poverty and a negative perception of the U.S. and Western dominance will continue to provide AQ and Jihadists a steady flow of willing participants. It will be a good deal of time before these imposing and significant social issues are turned around throughout the Mid East. Until then, AQ's strategic goal will be a source of strength in that it will connect them to a well-spring of disenfranchised Muslims. Conversely and importantly, it is also their most significant vulnerability, because the Islamic world at large does not concur with AQ's strict ideology and does not approve of terrorism.

The challenges that AQ, a networked non-state actor, poses is one that the U.S. national security apparatus is not well designed to handle. The institutionalized and stove-piped interagency architecture has created a cumbersome process through which the elements of national power can be wielded. Interagency professionals are promoted by achieving operational successes for their particular agencies or departments. Important horizontal interagency coordination is conducted within the NSC, which is designed to serve the President. At the important high operational levels, horizontal coordination is paltry. While the interagency process is capable of bringing forth the proficiencies of each agency and department, it is slow and unwieldy under the current architecture. Most high-level interagency members cling to their departmental views, rather than national views, as a form of bureaucratic protectionism.

The strategic ends called for in the 2006 NSCT include preventing attacks by terrorist networks, denying WMD to rogue states and terrorist allies who seek to use them, denying terrorists the support and sanctuary of rogue states, and denying terrorists control of any area they would use as a base and launching pad for terror. Those strategic ends are consistent with reasonable national security expectations. The NSCT went further to state that combating terrorism requires the application of all elements of national power. A review of the ways and means through which the U.S. is working to achieve its NSCT ends reveals gaps and seams.

The structure through which the U.S. combats terrorism is a subset of the national security apparatus. Seams in the U.S. CT system are marked by the interagency stovepipes, which avert the requisite synchronization of the elements of national power. While JIACGs are in many cases conducting good work, they do not have the essential authorities to direct synchronized interagency operations at the theater operational level. It is the lack of operational level synchronization that significantly diminishes the agility and speed needed to execute effective CT actions.

While the most obvious problems the U.S. faces in combating terrorism stem from the seams created by systemic stovepipes, there are also significant gaps. The greatest gap is the absence of a comprehensive strategic communications policy, which is compounded by the lack of interagency cooperation. The Hawala monetary transfer system is another significant gap for which the U.S. has no effective method to stop the flow of terrorist funding.

Resisting change is an expected human inclination. Realizing that goals are not being achieved is a powerful stimulus for change. AQ's successful operations and five

years of lessons from the WOT have indicated that the current U.S. interagency construct lacks the ability to create agile, quick and synchronized responses. The question is whether there is enough proof, or public awareness, to cause change.

Successful solutions for a new national security apparatus construct will be found by searching for future interagency expectations and requirements. That process would have to be conducted in a dispassionate and forthright manner in order to result in an effective construct. Interagency professionals would have to be a part of the process in that they would require evidence of how change has enhanced interagency proficiency in order to become the next generation leaders personifying the new national security apparatus.

For the U.S. to come out on top in the WOT, it must identify it for what it is—an ideological struggle. Rightly or wrongly, Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations identify themselves as vanguards of the greater Muslim civilization. As the preeminent Western democracy, the U.S. has become the de facto vanguard of Western civilization. Ideological struggles last for long periods of time as learned in the Cold War. Hence, to win the WOT, a steady strain and pace will be required as well as persistence and resilience.

Improving on and mastering the art of perception management must be at the center of the U.S. strategic communications objectives. The speed and quantity of internet based propaganda must be met and overcome. Substituting perceptions of U.S. hegemony must be replaced with constructive and optimistic messages. Publicly exposing and de-legitimizing AQ and Islamic fundamentalists for their vicious intimidation must be at the core of the message. Reducing the large U.S. footprint

currently in the Mid East will eventually prove to be helpful toward the U.S. strategic communications message as well. As important as the peaceful strategic communications message is, the U.S. should, nonetheless, maintain its pre-emptive CT policy towards AQ and Jihadist organizations for the foreseeable future.

Without the effects of internal influence and human intelligence, the U.S. will never effectively reverse difficult intercultural dilemmas such as those posed by the hateful ideological dogma of some Madrassas and the movement of money via the hawala system. Enlisting the aid of locals via a new OSS-like system will eventually give the U.S. the ability to compete with the Jihadists' societal awareness. More importantly, the U.S. will be able to shape an important dimension of the battle-space.

Decades of experience fighting terrorism in Northern Ireland has taught the British how to effectively collaborate within their interagency. The U.S. could learn a lesson from the British, because a whole of government approach capitalizes on all the elements of national power. The agility and speed required to produce broad spectrum, effective CT solutions cannot be brought to bear without updating the authorities, capabilities, and responsibilities of the interagency. The whole of government goal is to be able to project all elements of national power in concert, on-time and with a common purpose. Though organizing, manning, training, equipping and providing resources for such a construct will be complex, in the long run it will be well worth the effort.

A National Security Officer designation and education similar to the Joint Staff Officer qualification and education will ensure that stovepipes are eliminated by expanding interagency cooperation and efficacy, and tying professional incentives and success to a broader whole of government orientation.

Although the U.S. strategy for combating terrorism is for the most part logical and well reasoned, it is not fully achievable because the organization through which the U.S. combats terrorism lacks the capability of projecting all elements of national power in concert, on-time and with a common purpose. In other words, the current U.S. structure cannot provide essential ways and means to achieve its chosen ends. It is time for an updated National Security Act designed to capitalize on the agility, speed and synchronization offered by effectively combining information age technologies with the benefits of a whole of government interagency construct. The result will be a national security apparatus capable of more effectively combating networked terrorist organizations in the future.

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